



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

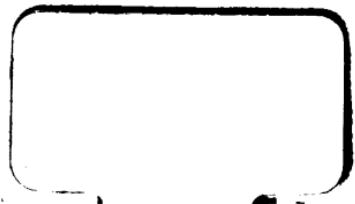
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









**NOT THE LEAST DANGER.**

Page 8.



# THE SISTERS:

*A Domestic Tale.*

BY MRS. HOFLAND.



LONDON:  
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

MDCCLXVI.

2537 f. 29.

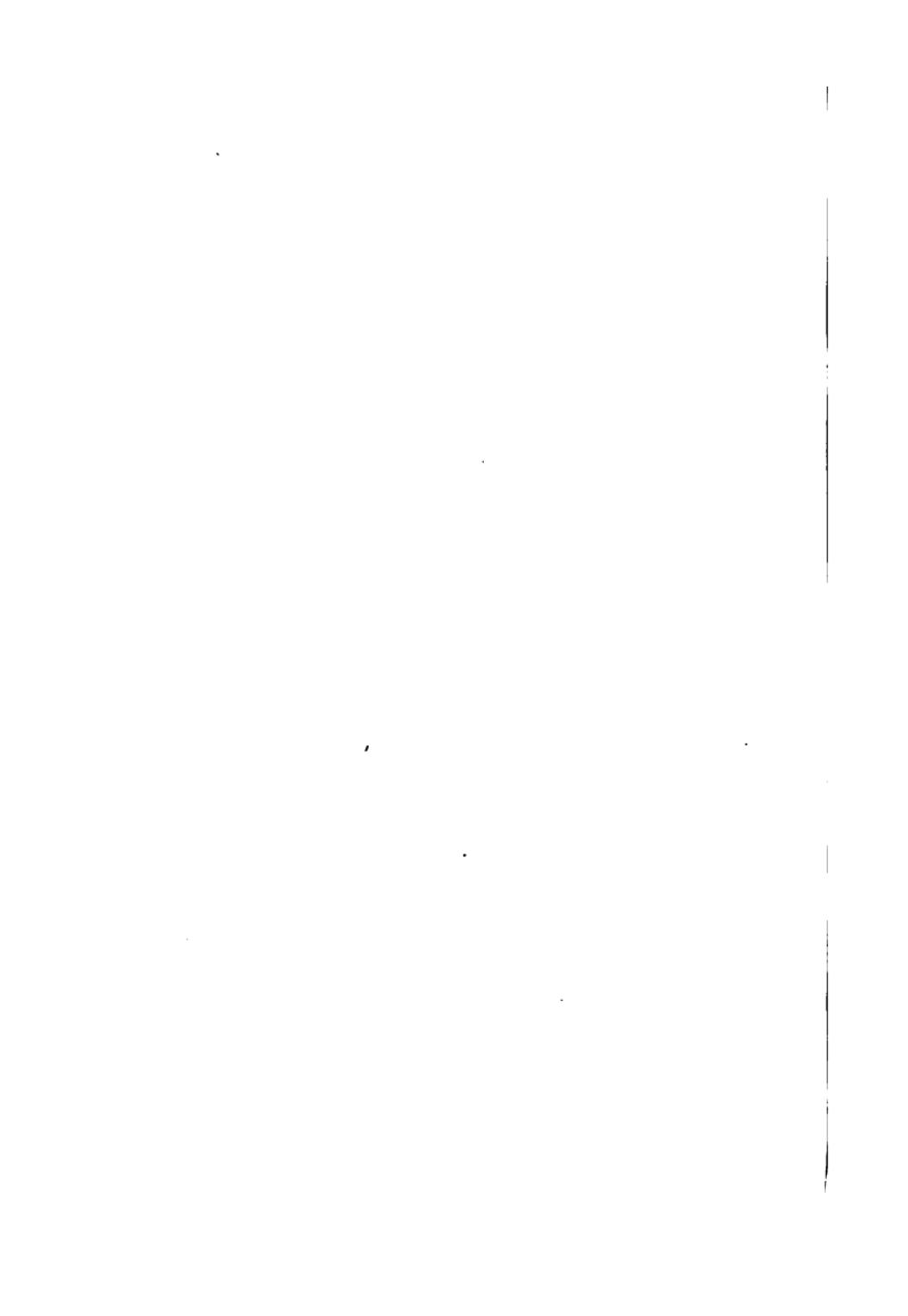




## CONTENTS

Chapter						Page
I.	THE FADED FLOWER,	...	...	...	...	9
II.	THE DEceiver,	...	...	...	...	27
III.	THE BLIGHTED HOPE,	...	...	...	...	40
IV.	THE FORSAKEN HOME,	...	...	...	...	47
V.	THE HIDDEN MERCY,	...	...	...	...	58
VI.	THE FAITHFUL TEACHER,	...	...	...	...	66
VII.	THE CURATE'S BLESSING,	...	...	...	...	84
VIII.	THE WOUNDED SPIRIT,	...	...	...	...	98
IX.	LIGHT IN DARKNESS	...	...	...	...	115
X.	THE FIRST APPEARANCE,	...	...	...	...	131
XI.	THE BROKEN HEART,	...	...	...	...	156
XII.	THE DAY OF ADVERSITY,	...	...	...	...	166
XIII.	VIRTUE REWARDED,	...	...	...	...	175







## THE SISTERS.

---

### L

#### *The Faded Flower.*

“To Bristol’s fount I bore, with trembling care,  
Her faded form—she bow’d to taste the wave,  
And died.” MASON.



“O not go so near to the edge of the rocks, Olivia ; a false step might produce the most terrible consequences,” said Mrs. Mortimer to her daughter, as, with the rest of a gay party, they clambered up the neighbouring mountains, to gain a more perfect view of the beautiful lake of Derwentwater, near Keswick.

“My dear mother, there is not the least danger : you are so used to the flat pavements in London, that you fancy every stone a rock, and every

hillock a mountain : in *this* place we can have nothing to dread : had you seen the really terrible drive I took yesterday, with Mr. St. Faire, what would you have said then ? ”

“ I should have said *then*, what I say *now*, Olivia ; that where danger is very apparent, it induces care which seldom fails to prove a preservative ; but in trifling cases, where less caution is necessary, we frequently suffer from our entire neglect—a rule that will apply perhaps as much to the path of life in general as to that we are pursuing.”

Olivia Mortimer, to whom this was addressed by a tender mother, had perhaps as good an excuse for those light and buoyant spirits, which urged her to pursue unheedingly a slippery path, as any young person could possibly have. She was the only child of amiable and wealthy parents, who fondly loved and indulged her ; she possessed uncommon beauty, agility, and grace ; was just turned of eighteen, and was now on a tour of pleasure to the northern lakes, with parents for whom she had the tenderest affection, friends for whom she felt the warmest esteem, and a worthy youth, of most prepossessing manners, whom, with the sanction of her father, and the truest regard of her own heart, she had lately admitted to consider himself as a received lover ; his happiness on that account considerably augmented her

own, since it accorded not only with the increasing partiality she felt for him, but with the general sympathy of her gentle and benevolent disposition, which, though very sprightly, was ever alive to the feelings and wishes of those around her.

Perhaps human happiness, in all the various scenes and modifications in which it is enjoyed, presents nothing more truly excellent than that which must be enjoyed by a young person so situated, "when all things charm, for life itself is new;" there is an elasticity in the spirits, a spring in the heart, which gives power to seize on every form of beauty and follow every vision of the imagination to their utmost limits of enjoyment. Satiety has not cloyed, amusement has not wearied, the world has not disgusted such a one; the frowns of adversity, the languor of sickness, the insipidity of some in society, the virulence of others, and the general cold-heartedness of all, have not yet cast that mantle which the hand of experience never fails to throw over the mind's eye in future life, and which, while it shades us from many evils, yet robs us of the power of viewing life through that medium which alone sheds lustre on the hours of ease and happiness. On the path of Olivia shone light without a cloud, roses unmixed with thorns; admired by all eyes, commended by all tongues, and in appearance at least

beloved by all hearts, without one wish ungratified for the present, or one fear for the future, whose promises were those of love and hope, no wonder that her light foot, like her still lighter heart, scarcely pressed the turf it trod upon, and called for the caution expressed by a mother whose solicitude kept that pace with her affection which is the peculiar characteristic of maternal love, and seldom estimated by the young and lively.

“Too much care is a very bad thing, my dear madam,” said Olivia, in reply to Mrs. Mortimer’s last observation: “look at the children of the peasantry; they skip and run like mountain goats, and find the recompense of their vigour and activity in the bloom of health, and the power of varying their pleasures. Before I return to London, you will see me able to outdo all the urchins, I hope.”

In order to convince Mrs. Mortimer more fully of the irrefragability of her arguments, Olivia had turned round, and with a sweetly-playful smile, her fine eyes fixed on her mother’s face, and her hands extended in aid of her words, was thus giving her reasons, stepping of course backwards. She was the foremost of the party, her lover had given his arm to her mother, Mr. Mortimer was some distance below assisting the mother and sister of Mr. St. Faire, when, just as she had pro-

nounced the last words, she set her foot on some loose gravelly sand, and instantly fell backwards with great force, but for so short a space, that although the alarmed mother screamed, the rest of the party had all the inclination possible to laugh at her, and rally her on the vain boast. Their emotion was quickly changed when they perceived, on St. Faire springing to her assistance, she was utterly unable to rise ; and when they endeavoured to move her, she shrieked in such agonies as to alarm all who heard her in the most distressing manner.

The lover in distracted haste flew back to Keswick for a carriage and a surgeon. During his absence poor Olivia had fallen into a death-like swoon, from which she only recovered to complain of pain so acute, that she was obliged to lament that her sense of it was restored. Yet it plainly appeared that she had not fractured any limb, and her head was perfectly uninjured ; but on raising her, it was discovered that she had fallen so immediately upon an obtruding stone, that there was every reason to fear the pain she experienced arose from some dreadful injury received in the pine, and a surgical examination proved this to be the fact.

To describe the affliction of her parents is utterly impossible ; from this moment the voice

of joy was heard no more in the little party : Mrs. Mortimer for many weeks hung over the sick-bed of her suffering darling, scarcely hoping for life, nor knowing what she ought to desire, as there appeared no prospect in protracted existence but that of protracted suffering. Perhaps the extreme distress of Mr. St. Faire for a time exceeded even that of her mother, for grief, as a passion, is felt violently in youth, and he was not only a fond and faithful lover, but an ardent admirer. Full of awakened hope, he was scarcely two and twenty, and like his betrothed Olivia, was affluent and happy in his connections, and had never felt a sorrow till now, for the only loss he had sustained, which was that of his father, had taken place too early in life to be remembered by him with any regret ; this sudden affliction therefore overwhelmed him with an anguish as poignant as it was unexpected, and was in many respects more terrible than even the stroke of death itself, since it appeared equally hopeless, and much more lingering in the torture it inflicted.

During a considerable period, the terrible and continual pain in which poor Olivia lay induced the medical attendants to administer so much opium, that the operation of her reason was in a great measure suspended, and when she ceased to complain, she was in perpetual stupor ; and the

fine features that were one hour writhing in agony, were the next vacated by thought. What were the feelings of the mother, who was wont to consider them as the medium of intelligence, vivacity, and sensibility ? how felt the proud father, whose hopes were crushed by such a stroke of wretchedness ?

At length Mrs. St. Faire, her son, and daughter, were obliged to return to London, some affairs there needing their presence ; and as Olivia was recovering, though slowly, it was hoped that the Mortimers would be able to follow before winter, being anxious, to the greatest degree, to secure for their darling that higher medical help to be found only in the metropolis. St. Faire departed, still nourishing that hope which youth nurses in despite of probability, and vowing eternal fidelity to one whose sufferings only rendered her still dearer to his heart, and whom he felt if possible more engaging, more fondly and tenderly endeared, stretched pale and helpless on the bed of sickness, than she had been in all the bloom of beauty and gaiety of health.

A degree of amendment was at length perceptible, and the fears of death were removed ; but alas ! a dreadful and cureless deformity had taken place ; and that graceful form, so full of animation, and so long remarked as the very standard of

elegance, was warped, as it appeared, beyond all restoration, though the pain to which it subjected her admitted of alleviation : her colour was entirely gone, and a cold and livid paleness overspread her features ; and her sunken eyes, robbed of their brilliance, seemed to mourn over the wreck of that beauty which had fled with the more valuable enjoyment of health.

In this situation was Olivia Mortimer, the late envied belle, whose form had attracted the admiration of one sex and the envy of the other, brought back to the circle which had so lately considered her person the model of beauty, and her dress the standard of taste ; who had extolled her accomplishments, sought her friendship, copied her manners, and in every possible way flattered her self-love, and won her good-will. The tender compassion they evinced, for a time soothed and affected her ; but she was soon condemned to see that envy could exult in her affliction, and carelessness forget her solitude ! and that now she had ceased to be worshipped as an idol, she also ceased to be remembered as a friend—that many who had hung round her as the companion of a ball-room, with adulation on their lips, ceased to make an inquiry, or sit an hour beside her couch. No more the harbinger of pleasure, or the director of fashion, she was no longer consulted about a

gala dress, or advised with on a complimentary note ; but, compassion exhausted and ceremony satisfied, was allowed to remain in her isolated apartment, a lonely and forsaken sufferer, to wear out the tedious day in lamentations for past pleasure and vague hopes for the future, over which the heart sickened whilst it fed.

Every medical man of eminence was consulted, various means were resorted to, and many painful experiments made, but all to very little purpose ; some degree of general health was restored, but no essential alteration effected. Watering-places were then tried with as little success ; though the sea did prove in a considerable degree beneficial, yet it failed to produce any change in that unhappy shape, which now became confirmed deformity, including certain ailments, which, though not immediately destructive to life, must effectually check all enjoyment of it, and confirm the unhappy Olivia an invalid for the rest of a life, which, nevertheless, might be a long one.

For two long years St. Faire continued to hope, and fear, and doubt, and feel ; determined never to renounce the connection, though urged to it by every argument the purest love and friendship could adduce—alas ! it was in these two years St. Faire became most sensible of the value of the jewel thus wrested from his grasp, but which pro-

bably could never have shone with equal brightness, if it had not been thus purified in the fire of affliction. But whatever were *his* sufferings, how bitter soever his tears, or strong and unabating his regard, it fell far, far short of the sorrow necessarily felt by the mother, who, in perpetually chaining herself to the apartment of her daughter, in watching every indication of pain in her countenance, and anticipating everything she was about to suffer from expected operations, and above all, in sympathizing with her mental distress, might be truly said to suffer so much with her, and for her, that she bore the *greater* part of this heavy calamity ; and it was observed, that as poor Olivia regained some degree of strength, her mother's proportionably wasted, and that, at the time I speak of, Mrs. Mortimer was evidently in a decline.

Mrs. Mortimer, to all those virtues which render a woman truly estimable and beloved, added a deep sense of religion ; or I might say with more propriety, being really a *religious* woman, all those virtues and qualities which render a character amiable and valuable, naturally sprang up in her, as the fruits of that celestial plant in her soul. Mr. Mortimer, though a worthy, sensible, generous, and accomplished man, possessing what is called a "*sense of religion*," was not equally

excellent with herself, and being proud of Olivia's person and accomplishments, had been subject to check in her any disposition to partake of what he chose to consider the *gloomy* side of his lady's mind ; though it was an incontrovertible fact that Mrs. Mortimer possessed more steady cheerfulness than himself, and had on many important occasions proved, by her resignation to the Divine will, that she was enabled to extract peace even from the hand of sorrow, and support him at the times when he was called to support her.

These trials had consisted of the sickness and death of three fine boys, who had been at different times taken from them in infancy, and whose loss had been the more lamented, as a considerable estate now in Mr. Mortimer's possession, was entailed on the male heir, a very distant relation, personally unknown to the present possessor, who was very naturally led to desire that a child of his own might inherit the estate he had received from his father. As, however, the all-wise Disposer thought good to deprive him of this hope, he did not therefore sit down in sullen discontent, but animated by the example of his wife, when his first sorrows had subsided, he consoled himself with the treasure he had still left from the wreck of his family ; and in the personal accomplishments and amiable disposition of his daughter, ceased to

lament, though he could not wholly cease to regret, the sons he had lost ; when all his fondest hopes were overthrown by this fatal stroke. Poor Mrs. Mortimer had not only to sustain her own severe affliction, in beholding the sufferings of her only child, and to give that continual attention and support which her distressing case demanded, but she had likewise perpetual calls on her patience and condolence from her husband, whose spirits and temper were affected by this unlooked-for misfortune, in a manner the most painful to his meek and religious wife, who beheld, with infinite concern, that the heart of her dear partner in suffering did not yield that resignation to the Divine will he had hitherto manifested ; being ready to cry out with the rebellious Cain, "Behold, my punishment is greater than I can bear." To obviate this increase of her sorrow, Mrs. Mortimer endeavoured, by the most unremitting exertion, to bend his mind to the Divine will, and by her own fortitude to excite *his* : she was cheerful in her manners, though her heart was torn with anguish, and she endeavoured alternately to excite hope and guard against disappointment ; so as to enable him to cast his cares upon the Omnipotent hand that thus allotted them, and yet to excite him to perpetual exertion to obtain the means Providence has appointed for relief ; well

knowing that when every effort proves ineffectual, there is still a consolation left in the heart, from the sense of having done our best for the benefit of those we love. Thus circumstanced, Mrs. Mortimer might be said to have two beings, both infinitely dear to her, hanging upon her for comfort and help, at the very time when her frame, enfeebled by past suffering and present exertion, really called for the help she was bestowing ; and it was therefore no wonder, that although her mind was enabled to draw succour from above, by the continual exercise of faith and prayer, her frame sunk beneath the conflict, and silently sought for rest in the tomb : of her sufferings it might be said truly—

“ The saint sustained them, but the woman died.”

So fearful was this tender mother of adding to her daughter’s sorrow, that she could not bear to reveal to her the gradual decline she felt in her health, until concealment was no longer practicable ; and the medical attendants on Olivia had declared that they considered her mother in much more danger than she had ever been, so far as her life was concerned. Mr. Mortimer awoke as from a dream of despondency to a sight of horror ; and found, when too late, that in lamenting his child he had neglected his wife—and Olivia saw that

the purchase of her remaining life and circumscribed comforts was paid with the loss of her invaluable mother : both, alarmed and tenderly affected, insisted on removing immediately to Bristol, in the faint hope that those celebrated wells might stop the progress of decline, and with Divine assistance restore to them the amiable and exalted being, whose worth was most truly estimated in the hour when she was about to be taken from them ; for though ever fondly beloved, and highly estimated, yet never so very dearly, so very tenderly, as *now*.

The journey and the waters produced their usual effects, a partial amendment, which, contrary to the common rule, deceived all but the patient, who grew every day more conscious of the awful change that awaited her, and became the more solicitous to improve the precious moments, so quickly approaching to their final close. She perceived, with deep and lively gratitude to Heaven, that the heart of her child was now so fondly drawn towards her, that every word she uttered was treasured as a precious deposit, and every proof she gave of resignation to the Divine will was considered by Olivia as containing this advice, "Go thou and do likewise ;" and she seized on these moments of meekness and tender sorrow to impress on the ductile mind of the youthful

sufferer, with new interest and power, all the leading truths of the gospel, the invaluable precepts it conveys, and the gracious promises it contains. She led her so to store her mind with the virtues, and so to fortify her heart with the faith and hope Christianity alone inspires, that whenever she should be called away, Olivia would not *sink* under the affliction, deeply as she would feel it ; but would be enabled, notwithstanding the melancholy privation to which she was subject, to lead a life happy to herself, beneficial to her fellow-creatures, and glorious to that God whose hand had chastened her so severely ; but who never faileth to help those who trust in Him, and who "giveth the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," even in cases so deeply and incurably afflictive, where the heart is so torn from all its fondest hopes and most allowable expectations, as to preclude all earthly comfort, and to hold out no other prospect than that of suffering through life.

Mrs. Mortimer had not wept and prayed in vain ; she lived to "see her anxious desires accomplished ;" for every step which brought *her* nearer to the grave, brought the child of her hopes nearer to the character she so prayerfully desired to see her attain ; and reconciled her to exchanging that sweet dream of felicity that she had once

indulged, of beholding her daughter a happy wife and mother, lovely and beloved, to considering her that isolated being, an ailing, ordinary, old maid, unblest by natural connections, necessarily bereft of the man she still tenderly loved, and probably forsaken by her youthful acquaintance, and deserted by an ill-judging world. She knew that in every situation of life a Christian can find the exercise of benevolence towards others afford the sweetest enjoyment of which the mind is capable ; and that, although our heavenly Father “chastiseth every child whom he receiveth,” yet “he strikes with pity, and but wounds to heal.”

Thus consoled, her last moments were spent in giving comfort to her comforters, by strenuously pointing out, to both her husband and child, the blessings each enjoyed in the other, and what both might enjoy in possessing themselves more fully of the privileges of that religion which is the stay of the afflicted, and which she felt more excellent, the nearer she approached that awful bourne where only it can be duly estimated. As Mr. St. Faire had come to the hot wells, for the express purpose of once more seeing a lady for whom he had entertained a truly filial regard, she admitted him into her apartment, as if he were indeed her son, and at length prevailed on her poor Olivia to meet him by *her* bedside. This she had not yet

accomplished, owing perhaps to some little remaining vanity in the poor girl, who could not hitherto be prevailed upon to expose her altered person and withered features to the eye of him who was wont to gaze upon them with delight, and who had by many an affectionate epistle sought to renew the connection so fatally suspended. This meeting was extremely affecting; it served at once to annihilate hope and to cement friendship; to give a death-blow to that youthful passion which still lurked in the breast of St. Faire, and establish that higher regard which Olivia now merited far more than she had ever done before. Mrs. Mortimer read the feelings of both parties, and, happy to see her daughter obtain more composure in the company of this young man than she had once expected she would have enjoyed, she earnestly recommended to him a steady observance of the advice one so attached to him, and who knew the nature he possessed so well, might from time to time be enabled to give. On the other side, she requested Olivia ever to treat him with the openness and confidence of a sister, saying that the time might probably come when she would need a counsellor and friend; and that although misfortune had put them asunder, Providence might yet enable them in many ways to assist and help each other, if each resolved so to conquer their own wills as to subdue

sorrow for the past by friendship for the present. Finding herself much exhausted by speaking, she desired Mr. Mortimer might be called: when he entered, he perceived a considerable change had taken place since he had left the room, and flew towards her, with alarm pictured on his countenance. She took his hand, and endeavoured to relate what she had said to St. Faire; but finding herself unable to proceed, beckoned the young man nearer to her. She took his hand, and joining it to Mr. Mortimer's, then made a motion for Olivia's also: the poor girl drew near trembling, but offered her hand; alas! at what a moment did it meet that of her once betrothed lover! Mrs. Mortimer took them all together, and for some minutes bent over them in silent but fervent prayer—then exerting herself by a last effort, she audibly blessed them all; when, overcome by the exertion, she feebly commended her own soul to Heaven, smiled on them, and expired.





## II.

### *The Deceiver.*

"Ere you choose,  
Pause, ponder, sift, deliberate, and weigh."  
YOUNG.

HEN the last awful duties were paid to the beloved remains of this excellent woman, the father and daughter mutually endeavoured to console each other for the severe loss they had sustained, as being not only bound to this conduct by their mutual affection, but conscious that it was the particular desire of that blessed spirit, who, if it were possible, was still watching over their happiness and increasing their love. They did not, according to the usual custom, fly from the scene of their sorrow, but found a kind of pensive satisfaction from still lingering near the loved remains, and in retracing the steps of her who was so dear to them ; and as there was at

present very little company, and poor Olivia was naturally desirous of remaining unseen, she prevailed on her father to take lodgings for the winter—a circumstance willingly adopted, under the idea that the air and waters might help to restore that health to *her* which they could not give her more debilitated mother.

In the course of the winter several patients were brought to the wells, whose extreme weakness rendered it unlikely they should ever leave them; and both they and the friends who attended them naturally excited much interest and sympathy in a family who knew so well how to appreciate their affliction; and although Olivia never appeared in public, except at divine service, she was ever ready to perform the office of the good Samaritan for all who needed it. It so happened, that during the following spring, just as they were about to leave the hot-wells, in consequence of the great accession of company, a part of their lodging-house was taken by a widow lady, who was so far advanced in a decline, that she died the day after her arrival—an event so singularly distressing, that Mr. Mortimer and his daughter, finding that she was attended by a daughter and a niece, felt it their duty to offer any assistance in their power to two young people so painfully situated. They were the more inclined to do this, from learning

that the poor lady who was dead, having subsisted principally on an annuity, her daughter was now called upon to cope, not only with the affliction of losing her only parent, but of encountering comparative poverty, her own fortune being very small: her niece was understood to be only a visitant, drawn from motives of humanity to accompany the ladies on this melancholy occasion.

The kind offer of Miss Mortimer to wait upon them was thankfully accepted; but it was impossible for poor Olivia not to perceive, that even the affliction of Miss Bolton, the daughter, did not prevent her from eyeing the person of her visitant with looks of contempt rather than pity, and a kind of manner which said, "If you were not a woman of large fortune, I would not speak to you." The amiable visitant had entered the room with a heart beating with every tender emotion towards a young woman suffering under the first shock of that loss, whose bereavement, though not loudly, she yet deeply deplored: her heart was warm and her hand liberal, and as she was just coming of age, and would then take possession of her mother's jointure, she was revolving, in a thousand ways, in what manner she could assist the dependent orphan, without wounding her delicacy, at the very time when the chilly reception she met with fell like an ice-bolt on her warm

and benevolent heart. She did not, however, suffer the impression to remain; she reflected that her form was indeed altered, and that allowance must be made for the feelings of a stranger, who had evidently consulted her glass, even in the midst of her distress, and who had seen there a form of uncommon grace, and was therefore not prepared for one of the description hers now wore.

While thus correcting in herself that proneness to anger, the best of human beings are but too apt to indulge under such circumstances, the entrance of Emily Lewis, the niece of the deceased lady, relieved her feelings in the most agreeable way, by the endearing suavity and unaffected kindness of her manners, the gratitude that she expressed, and the piety with which she adverted to the awful circumstance which had now occasioned them to meet. For *her* sake Olivia determined to renew her visits, as her benevolence towards the cousin was not merely governed by her feelings, being equally the result of her principles and her sensibility. She would not have done less essential good to Miss Bolton, had an opportunity occurred for doing so, because she thought herself an unpleasant visitant to her; but without the motive she now possessed, it is hardly likely that she would have returned to expose herself to the same species

of revolting conduct again ; though she had already engaged to perform every office of friendship for one who certainly needed it, whether she merited it or not.

On the following day, Mr. Mortimer accompanied his daughter, and Miss Bolton received both with such improved manners, and such thankful expressions, that Olivia rejoiced that she had not mentioned her first fears respecting this young lady to her father, conscious that he would have condemned her for indulging in an unfair conclusion. She now felt as if she must have mistaken the apparent coldness of Miss Bolton, and not remembered as she ought that grief affects people in very different ways, and that the sympathizing interest she had really taken for her might have appeared to that lady affectation or intrusion. She perceived that, although yet a very fine woman, Miss Bolton was at least thirty, that she had lived much in the world, and Olivia's mother had told her an intercourse of that kind seldom failed to plant suspicion and eradicate ingenuousness from the heart ; she therefore concluded they had not properly understood each other at first, but might prove more assimilated on further acquaintance. On the other hand, Emily Lewis was younger than herself, and, like herself, untaught to repel affection, or better taught than to value

exterior, she turned towards the sweet girl with a smile of sisterly affection, and in a short time confirmed all the kind predilections she had felt for her. Having dismissed all the prejudice she had allowed to creep in upon her mind respecting her cousin, it was no wonder that from this time the families became as intimate as possible, every circumstance contributing to unite them; and when Mr. Mortimer and his daughter set out for London, a pressing invitation was given to both the strangers to visit them there the following winter, which Miss Bolton complied with immediately; Miss Lewis conditionally, as she must consult her parents, to whom she was now returning with her cousin, who had accepted their invitation for some months, till she had considered how to dispose of herself.

The late Mrs. Bolton was the widow of a physician, who had died too early in life to make any provision for his wife and daughter, beyond the furniture of a large handsome house in which he had lived, and an annuity secured to his lady at the time of his marriage, by sinking her fortune. With this annuity, and the property arising from the sale of his effects, had she retired into the country, and lived prudently, she might not only have enjoyed every convenience desired in respectable society, but have insured them to her

daughter, who was entering her fourteenth year at the time of her father's decease. Unfortunately Mrs. Bolton had conceived that there was no happiness to be found in this life, except in a certain circle into which she had been, ever since her marriage, endeavouring to push herself, with various success: being sometimes very graciously received, as "a pretty obliging woman, whom no one need be ashamed of introducing;" at others, looked down upon as an impertinent intruder, who must be stared out of countenance, or contemptuously neglected. At the time of the doctor's death, the last state appeared inevitable, and it is difficult to say whether the widow wept the most for the loss of her husband, who was really a very worthy man, or the loss of that station which she had begun to consider she held in society;—her grief was, however, checked by the consideration that her daughter gave the promise of being a beauty, and that if she could manage, by any means, to keep up her present establishment in society for two or three years, and improve the advantages of person which her daughter possessed by those accomplishments now so generally called for, it was possible that her marriage with some wealthy, and perhaps titled man, would at once have placed her on a permanent footing in that rank of society where

she had so long moved, rather by permission than right.

Full of this scheme, Mrs Bolton shook off her sorrows, curtailed her expenses in private, increased them in public, and took especial pains to improve the person and charms of her daughter, who was a haughty spoiled child, but possessed sufficient adroitness and vanity to enter into all the ideas her foolish mother wished to inspire. From this time the life of both parent and child was a continual struggle to keep up appearances, which is, of all other kinds of slavery, the most to be hated by those who seek happiness—despised by those who possess integrity; and while it never fails to be seen through, awakens the ridicule of some, the contempt of others, and the derision of all. Ever in debt, the life of Mrs. Bolton consisted in giving entertainments which made her heart ache; feasts which were the preludes to fasts; and promises to creditors, which were meant to be broken, or fulfilled only for the purpose of doubling the debt—her spirits supported, from time to time, by the vague hope of seeing her daughter beloved as much as she was admired, and that some of the many danglers who attended her in public as a fine fashionable girl, whom Lord Dashwell admired, and Sir Harry declared was enchanting, would in sober earnestness ask her to be his wife.

But year after year rolled on, and the beauteous, charming, fascinating, bewitching Caroline Bolton, dressed and undressed, sighed and laughed, flirted with one, sentimentalized with another, and angled for all, without ever catching a husband. The poor mother, worn down with long expectation, saw her error when too late; disappointed in her hopes, harassed by her creditors, and even reproached by the daughter whom she had ever fondly loved, and to whose aggrandizement she had sacrificed all her comforts, she sunk into a decline, which increased with rapidity. The necessity of the case had at length obliged her to take cognizance of her affairs, and, by disposing of her furniture, settle the more immediate claims on her purse: her journey down to Bristol having exhausted her little strength, and shown her at once that another state of existence was opening to her view, for which she was wholly unprepared; that the gulf of poverty was yawning beneath the feet of her idolized Caroline; she was at once overwhelmed with the prospect, and sunk the day after her arrival, as we have already related, leaving her daughter the possession of her faults, without any portion of her repentance for them. She was, in fact, more proud and thoughtless towards others, and extravagant for herself, than her mother had ever been; having

learnt no other lesson from struggling with difficulties, but that of affecting principles when it suited her convenience, disguising native haughtiness by specious dissimulation, and substituting politeness of manners for gentleness of temper and benevolence of heart.

Such was the person who, at the appointed time, became a visitant at the house of Mr. Mortimer; her taste for dissipation and extravagance was now checked by habit, as well as necessity; having been for several months resident with Mr. Lewis, who was a country gentleman, the half-brother of Dr. Bolton, a worthy good man, who had in vain endeavoured to check the follies of relatives who never sought his society, except in some season of difficulty or distress, but whose good nature induced him to forget all their faults in the hour of their sufferings. He accompanied Caroline to the house of Mr. Mortimer, that he might satisfy his own mind as to the propriety of allowing his daughter to visit there; and when properly assured, he sent her over from his house in Berkshire, about a week after Miss Bolton. Olivia received her with joy, and their friendship became as permanent as it was warm and sincere. Olivia discovered in the mind of Emily that temper and disposition which she thought most calculated to make Mr. St. Faire

happy, and she spared no pains to add to them an acquaintance with those sources of knowledge which she knew to be most agreeable to him. When she thought the improved state of Emily's mind warranted her in the affectionate plan she had formed for their mutual happiness, she introduced them to each other; and placed her young friend in such an engaging point of view, that St. Faire could not fail to be pleased with one who so much resembled, in the most essential qualities, the person he had once so tenderly loved. In time the friendship he had conceived increased into affection, but he did not disclose his feelings on this subject until Olivia had fully given him her opinion, and expressed *her* wishes. He heard her not unmoved, for it was painful to him to believe she could resign him, even while he felt grateful for the strong interest she so evidently took in his happiness. For a while they wept together over their mutual misfortune; but when this distressing conversation was once past, St. Faire explained his feelings candidly to Emily, whose generous nature had already felt a great regard for him, for the sake of that dear friend whom they alike esteemed; and, sensible that she could conscientiously devote herself to soothing his early sorrows, she referred him to her father, who soon learned sufficient of his character to be

thankful to Providence for having led his daughter to a connection which not only advanced her situation in life, but placed her under the protection of a *good man*, which is the highest title humanity can aspire to.

Olivia had scarcely time to rejoice in a union so dear to her heart, and agreeable to her wishes, when she discovered the advances of *another*, which cost her many sighs, that of her father with Miss Bolton, though she was at this time happily ignorant of those circumstances in that lady's character, which, if known, would have overwhelmed her with wretchedness. During those hours which Olivia had dedicated to the instruction of Emily, this lady had with equal facility wound round the heart of Mr. Mortimer; and by encouraging him to repose his sorrows on her sympathy, had learned that his first great affliction was the death of his sons. This sorrow she had taken care so to renew and keep alive in his mind, that at length it possessed it wholly, and it was by her care confided only to her ear, lest it should wound the bosom of Olivia: from this subject it was easy to advert to the possibility of preserving the family by a second marriage. Mr. Mortimer was only forty-five, and a very handsome man; this was delicately hinted, and such hints thrown out by a very handsome

woman, who was herself no longer a girl, could not be disregarded. Mr. Mortimer loved his daughter, but alas! all hope of her perpetuating his family was over, and every man wishes to live in his offspring; and though the memory of his excellent wife was still very dear to him, he flattered himself he should be happy with another. So attached was he to old feelings and connections, that he never would have stepped aside to find a new one; but an imprudent acquaintance had wound a toil round him, which promised too much to be broken, even though it was not wholly consented to in the *heart*; and with a species of reluctant willingness, Mr. Mortimer at length resigned himself to Miss Bolton, as if he could not help it; while his daughter, with extreme solicitude for the future, regretted that the past had eluded her notice, till it was too late for *her* to help it.





### III.

## The Blighted Hope.

" Each mother void of grace,  
Asks for her child the dowry of a face;  
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring,  
And Sedley curse the form that charmed a king."

JOHNSON.



MRS. MORTIMER had weighed too well the character of her husband, to believe it possible that even her attractions, however highly she estimated them, would enable her to return all at once to the gay world, with that appearance of splendour which she considered the best gift of wealth, and the only harbinger of respect. She therefore set out in life with a propriety that divested Olivia of her fears, and awakened the love and confidence of her husband exceedingly. But alas! in proportion as she perceived the increase of his regard, she became less desirous of meriting it, and made use of every means in her power to induce him to

extend the circle of his acquaintance, enlarge his establishment, and live up to the very limits of his fortune. When he was inclined to remonstrate on the folly of such proceeding, especially when the probability of a young family coming in the course of a few years called for increased prudence, conceiving herself ill used, she became either so angry or so sorrowful, that he was generally induced to drop the subject and accede to her proposition. Being of too humane a disposition to do anything which might affect her health, and so totally unused to domestic altercation, he hesitated to enter into it without a necessity more pressing than yet appeared ; for although Mrs. Mortimer's encroachments on his purse, and the good order of his family establishment, were many, they presented themselves in such plausible shapes, as to be rather intrusive than alarming.

Mrs. Mortimer's first child was a girl, whom she named Caroline, after herself, but to whom she did not devote any of her time and attention —a conduct that greatly displeased her husband, who had been used to see such very different manners adopted by his late wife towards her offspring, at a period when she was much younger, and in his eyes much prettier than his present lady. He would certainly have urged her to

pursue a very different system, but for the hope that the birth of a son and heir would recall her to those duties as a mother, which she had not shown towards her little girl, and thereby check that passion for dissipation, which, to his extreme regret, he now perceived had arisen to an alarming height. She was never happy at home, except when she was either receiving company or projecting some plan for their entertainment, in which all domestic comfort was sacrificed to some scheme of show or parade, and an infinite number of petty improvements made, which were equally ridiculous and expensive, and, in Mr. Mortimer's opinion, derogatory to the house they affected to embellish. He had already found the inconvenience of having his windows made down to the ground; his comfortable stoves supplanted by more elegant ones; and the little sun which visited his windows ever excluded by verandahs. He had exhausted all his rhetoric in vain, to prove that an English climate neither needs the assistance of Italian shades nor endures the exclusion of artificial heat; his house, like his lady, was *fashionable*; and he was taught to see the difference between a fashionable wife, with no principles, and an unaffected obedient wife, swayed by religious principles, ten times a-day; but he comforted himself with the hopes that his

son would make amends to him for all the vexations he felt from the misconduct of the mother.

Disappointment followed. Mrs. Mortimer became the mother of another daughter, named Emily ; and as, after the temporary confinement this circumstance induced, she rushed into the gay world with more avidity than ever, her health became so injured that in the course of a year or two Mr. Mortimer lost all hopes of ever seeing himself the father of a son—a disappointment he felt the more bitterly, because the extravagance of his lady rendered it more necessary than ever that the estate should be kept in his family, as the only medium of providing for his wife and daughters in case of his death, which was too likely to be hastened by the continual anxiety to which he was subjected.

My young readers may think that Mr. Mortimer, as a sensible man and a good father, ought to have exerted himself to *oblige* his wife to abandon that mode of conduct which he deemed so highly reprehensible, and felt to be so injurious to his family, and they are right in their conception of his duty ; but it is not possible for them to be aware of the difficulty of this undertaking. Mr. Mortimer was now arriving at a period of life when every man wishes for ease on the one hand, and is flattered by attention on the other. He

suffered many things to pass unnoticed for the sake of the first, and his lady possessed too much art not to practise the other, so far as it answered the end she had in view. She was not only extravagant, but selfish to the greatest degree, as most extravagant people are ; for though they will frequently *give* profusely, it is either for the gratification of their pride or the temporary compassion of the moment ; yet their *own* happiness or their *own* character is in fact at the bottom of the action. Hence Mrs. Mortimer, though she never consulted the true happiness of her husband, or the future welfare of her children, yet exhibited a great degree of fondness towards *him* and indulgence for *them*. She had, during the period when herself and mother hung round the great, and sued for their smiles, become initiated into the art of flattering the foibles of every one with whom she conversed ; and as we have all some weak place accessible to those who are well acquainted with our characters and would rather encourage our errors than subdue them, it was no wonder that a person who was naturally penetrating, and habitually fawning, should be enabled, from time to time, to overcome the wiser resolutions of a man who was more inclined to repent his own folly for marrying one so much younger than himself, and to whose real disposition and

habits he was a stranger, than to blame *her* for squandering a fortune to which she had been imprudently raised.

If we did not see every day examples of similar conduct, we should be ready to conclude that Mrs. Mortimer was a singularly *weak* woman, when we consider how she was situated ; for it must be evident to every one, that if she spent more than her husband's income, which income arose principally from an estate which departed with his life, that herself and her daughters must be exceedingly reduced, whenever that event took place ; that common sense, and a common regard for herself, would point out a conduct directly the reverse : but, alas ! the lady never considered any gratification but her own immediate indulgence, and the dictates of her ambition ; and although her youth had been subject to numberless disappointments, yet having in the long run obtained an excellent establishment, she determined that her two daughters should retrace her steps, and provide themselves with husbands who did not require fortunes. For this purpose she resolved, if possible, to make them great beauties, and give them all those accomplishments which calculate young women to attract characters as frivolous as their own. From their earliest infancy the care of their complexions and their

forms was made an object of the first consequence with their mother, and was in fact the only thing about them to which she attended at all: it might be said, with Lord Lyttleton,—

“*By her, hands, lips, and eyes, are put to school,  
And each instructed feature has its rule;*”

so that these poor children were apparently condemned, from their earliest years, to forget all the higher ends of their existence, in the acquirement of external graces, neither blamable nor despicable in themselves, but rendered so when they are substituted for that course of virtuous instruction which prepares the ductile mind for the exercise of duties in this life and heavenly enjoyment in that which is to come.

This deplorable system was happily counterbalanced by the constant care and affectionate vigilance of Olivia, who, influenced by the most tender regard and the most conscientious motives, interposed between them and the destruction that awaited them, those salutary counsels which operated as a shield to their young minds, and prevented at least a considerable portion of the bad effects taking place which might have been expected. How far the evil and good operated by turns in their character, in proportion as the different conduct of their instructors prevailed, will be traced in the following pages.



#### IV.

### The Forsaken Home.

"To foreign glory, foreign bliss they roam,  
No thought of joy or happiness at home."—POPE.



T the time when Caroline had attained her eighth, and Emily her seventh year, Mrs. Mortimer had arrived at the completion of her hopes and the zenith of her greatness ; she had established an acquaintance with many persons of high rank and great celebrity in the fashionable world ; and though she was nearly forty, by dint of fashionable dress, and great pains in the use of cosmetics, her person still retained much beauty ; so that she was admired, and her entertainments crowded—which was pretty nearly all she wished for in this world. Her house was, for this very reason, rendered extremely unpleasant to Olivia, who, having a handsome independent fortune, had frequently resolved to seek

some situation more congenial to her feelings, where she might enjoy unmolested her inclination for reading, and the company of a few associates to her own taste. At this time there was a small estate, with a neat house, to be disposed of, in the neighbourhood of Mr. Lewis, and as that family, together with that of Mr. and Mrs. St. Faire, were especially dear to her, she resolved on the purchase, and mentioned her intention to the family.

Miss Mortimer had regularly paid her father £250 per annum for her board, which money his lady had ever received from her hands, and placed to her own use ; she did not like the idea of resigning it, and made many objections to part with a person whom she had found the most convenient creature in the world, as she not only took all essential care of the children off her hands, but kept Mr. Mortimer in good humour, by affording him a constant companion when she was engaged, and nursed him when he was poorly ; she, therefore, requested her "*dear Olivia*" not to think of leaving them, with great earnestness, looking to her husband to furnish her with new persuasives.

"When I consider," said Mr. Mortimer, "how much more suitably and happily situated Olivia will undoubtedly be in the country, I cannot be so selfish as to offer one motive to urge her stay :

I can only say, I am thankful that she has remained with us so long."

"But who," cried Caroline, "will teach us geography, and instruct us in history, and teach us to draw, when my sister is gone?"

"You must have a governess, child," said her father. "That will be £50 a year more out of my pocket," thought Mrs. Mortimer; and although she seldom calculated her own, she was pretty accurate in estimating the expense of every other person. But her thoughts were interrupted by Emily, who said, in a desponding tone, "But will the governess take us to see poor people, and explain the Bible to us, and tell us stories about good people, and pray with us, as Olivia does? and can we love her as well, papa? will she be as patient, and as kind?"

"I hope she will do her duty, child, but she will not be exactly what your *sister* has been to you," said the father. Emily drooping withdrew.

"Hold up your head, child," said the mother; "you want somebody to make you use the back-board more constantly, that is evident."

"Is this my reward?" said Olivia, internally, for she well knew that the wishes of the mother had been carefully attended to in *this* respect, as she had herself, for more than two years, performed the office of governess, with the utmost

solicitude, to her younger sisters. She saw plainly that as her father's approbation of her scheme had induced Mrs. Mortimer to conclude that she would not be prevailed upon to resign it, she now in a moment dismissed from her mind all obligation for the past, and could in an instant forget, that for eight years, *her* income, *her* time, *her* talents, and *her* comforts, had been expended, or lost in her service. Though her heart was still as warm as ever towards the children, yet the sense of their mother's ingratitude, together with the idea that this purchase might, in a few years, become an asylum for these very children, induced her hastily to conclude her bargain, and in a short time depart, in order to take possession of it, and furnish it as her future residence.

Although Olivia went through this affair with the steadiness and propriety it required, she was not sensible how very dear the children were to her heart, till the time of parting with them actually arrived: but, whatever might be the loss she felt, it was greatly exceeded by that which her absence occasioned, and more than all the inconveniences foreseen by Mrs. Mortimer were soon experienced in every department of her household. Two of the old servants who still remained, and had, with great difficulty, been prevailed upon by Olivia to bear the innovations

in the family manners, and the insults of the new race, introduced by their present lady, instantly abandoned situations they deemed no longer tenable, and their places were not easily supplied. The children wandered about dissatisfied and unhappy ; and Mr. Mortimer appeared absolutely disconsolate, though he uttered not a word of complaint : the house resembled a complicated piece of machinery, that is by some untoward accident deprived of its principal spring ; some parts stood still, others went wrong, and all had lost their direction.

Mrs. Mortimer was rather angry than sorry for this, and the more so, as she had no one to blame but herself ; for she could not lay any fault upon Miss Mortimer, whose "ill health," "too rigid morality," or "little peculiarities," had ever been considered the causes of every domestic trouble, since she had first entered the family. She was unwilling to *see*, what she could not avoid *feeling*, that a dissipated woman of fashion never is, nor can be, mistress of her own household ; for where such a person is either out of her house or appears in it but as a visitor, servants, children, strangers, govern it by turns ; but the nominal sovereign is seldom included amongst the list, even for a temporary share of *actual* government.

During the time when Mr. Mortimer was really

inquiring for a governess for his daughters, and his lady talking about it, in order to pass the time, as their mother could not bring herself to stay at home with *them*, she took them out with *her*. Handsome young mothers often wish to keep their girls in the nursery, lest they should make them look old ; but those who marry at thirty are equally wishful to exhibit their children, under the idea of a contrary effect. Mrs. Mortimer, pleased with this idea, and not considering the pernicious effects of it to her children, hurried them from one place of public resort to another ; and thus gave them a taste for pleasures, as destructive to the habits and simplicity of youth as detrimental to the beauty she was so anxious to cherish. In the course of a short time they were so much altered, that when Olivia returned to London for the purpose of finally settling her affairs there, she found them both looking so ill, as to feel really shocked at their appearance ; and she expressed her grief in terms suited to her sense of it.

“ We have had a great deal of pleasure, sister,” said Caroline ; “ mamma has taken us out every evening, and we have been so much admired, you cannot imagine.”

“ But we have not been happy, for all that,” added Emily.

“That is very possible, my love,” said Olivia; “when the mind is over-fed, it loses that relish for the common occupations and simple sweets of life which it once enjoyed; and in time, even the higher sources of amusement become equally vapid to the taste. In order to preserve our appetite, we should take these things seldom; plays, balls, and operas, are like high-seasoned dishes which we may eat once or twice in a season with safety, but are ruin to the constitution that feeds on them; and can seldom be administered at your age in any way with propriety, in my opinion.”

“Mamma does not think so,” said Caroline.

This was the rock on which it was almost impossible for these children not to split. Olivia had found in a thousand instances how difficult it was to teach a child how to avoid the error of a parent, and yet not expose that parent to the contempt of the child; but however difficult the task, she found herself again impelled to undertake it. She could not bear to see the blossoms of virtue, implanted by her own hand, thus prematurely nipped in the bud, without making further efforts to snatch them from impending oblivion: she remarked that Mrs. Mortimer had admitted that the personal appearance of her children was impaired by their late habits, and on this foundation she formed hopes of weaning them from it,

and even of prevailing upon her to permit them to pass some time with her in the country. This scheme, to her great mortification, she found opposed by the children themselves, who appeared to have contracted a horror at the very mention of the word, and, young as they were, expressed themselves in all the fashionable jargon of the day, declaring the country must be "a horrid bore, infinitely disagreeable, prodigiously stupid, monstrously dull; quite a quiz, and enough to kill one with *ennui*." To this cant they added all the affectation of suffering, when they were not immediately engaged in some scheme of amusement, and imitated the ladies whose dissipation had injured their health; so that Olivia was continually sickened with hearing that Caroline was dying with "nervous affection," and little Emily was sometimes "very languid," and at others "quite in a tremor:" instead of playing, or reading, they were continually talking of "becoming colours, fashionable waists, new steps, and celebrated beauties." "What a charming creature Lady Douglas is, especially when she dresses *à la Greque!*" cried Caroline; "she really looked enchantingly at the opera." "Still," said Emily, "I do not think her so *fascinating* as the Duchess of Derby; there is something bewitching in her manners—she is a divinity in my eyes."

“What will these children be?” said Olivia to herself, “when they have doubled their present age? ‘To dress, to dance, to roll the languid eye,’ will be the business of their existence; and all the labour my heart has hitherto bestowed upon them will be entirely lost: surely it is my duty to devote myself, in every possible way, to restore their minds to the simplicity of nature, and the pursuits of useful life; to count every sacrifice cheap which can purchase such a blessing!” Agreeably to this generous conclusion, she consented to remain some time in London; but she found that it is difficult to restrain habits once entered upon, especially when they have the sanction of a mother; and that those lessons once received from her hands with gratitude, were now poured into unwilling ears. The *dear sister*, whom they had once fondly loved, was now considered an austere friend, whose *person* accounted for the severity of her manners, and the intenseness of her piety; every way in which she worked was evidently against the grain; she was considered the bugbear, to whose society they were condemned for punishment. Their mother was looked to as the kind and generous being who soothed their pains, rewarded their toils, and dispensed their pleasures; and it was the more difficult to point out with effect any error in her system, because

she had of late adopted more gentle and conciliating manners to Olivia herself than she had ever done before, and affected to treat every plan of *hers* with the greatest deference only alleging her own excessive love of the children as her reason for breaking perpetually upon the rules she had with so much more wisdom prescribed for their conduct. The reason for this alteration, or rather improvement, in Mrs. Mortimer's manners, arose from the following circumstance.

When Miss Mortimer left her father's house, her step-mother not only felt the want of her board in her common expenditure, but likewise the convenience of applying to her for the loan of small sums, which ought to have been paid out of the liberal, and indeed extravagant ones intrusted by her husband. In order to supply this deficiency she had recourse to the gaming-table—a vice she had not before indulged in, knowing it was one which her husband held in the most decided contempt: the result became precisely what might have been expected—she was involved beyond the possibility of paying her debts of honour without assistance; and she was now endeavouring to obtain money from Olivia, who she hoped would be led to comply with her wishes, partly from love to her children, and partly as the means of saving her father from the severe mortification of paying

gaming debts, to which she well knew he had an insuperable aversion. Mr. Mortimer had frequently lamented the little affection his lady had shown for her offspring during their infancy, and she now trusted that her fondness, however shown, would be satisfactory ; and that the love they displayed to her would satisfy Mr. Mortimer as to the tenderness of her conduct, and induce him more readily to comply with requisitions for money. Thus, from various causes, none of which were really the effects of maternal love, these ill-fated girls were subject to all the inconveniences which result from blind indulgence ; their pride was nurtured, their vanity inflated, their love of truth injured, their devotion chilled, and every favourable circumstance in their dispositions destroyed or perverted, even under the eye of a judicious and affectionate friend ; and a father, who had been to that friend the kindest and wisest instructor, but who now becoming weary of contending to no purpose, and struggling to no end, resigned the reins of government into the hands of one who held them to her own destruction. Thus were they all situated when the following circumstance occurred.



V.

## The Hidden Mercy.

"What were our woes, but mercies in disguise?"—YOUNG.



N returning from a children's ball, about two o'clock in the morning, Emily complained of intense thirst and a violent pain in her temples, of which Mrs. Mortimer did not take any further notice, than to say she would be better when she got to bed. Olivia had long since retired to her own apartment, meditating as usual on the possibility of benefiting her younger sisters; and, as the child did not know any other person who would listen to her complaints, she went to bed immediately, but in about an hour became so ill that she arose, and creeping to Olivia's room as well as she was able, awoke her, and described the sensations she felt; from which it appeared that she had every symptom of approaching fever.



**TAKEN ILL.** Page 58



Miss Mortimer immediately arose, rung for her own maid, put the child into her own bed, and administered everything she thought likely to be of use; but finding the disorder increasing, she sent for a physician before daylight, who pronounced poor Emily seized with the scarlet fever, which at present appeared of a very malignant nature.

Mr. Mortimer was exceedingly alarmed, for he was very fond of his children; and he went up into his lady's room to inform her of it himself, fearful that any other person might alarm her too much: on his way to her chamber, he met Caroline coming down stairs, and taking her hand he led her into the chamber of her mother.

“And what have you done, Mr. Mortimer?” said the mother, when she had heard this account.

“*Done*, my dear! I believe everything Dr. Murray ordered is now *doing*, to the best of our power. Olivia is with Emily herself, and will not leave her.”

“But, I mean, have you ordered the coach? have you sent to take lodgings at Hampstead, or Kensington, or any where, for *me*? But, Caroline, how came you into the room?” added she, raising her head out of bed, and as instantly laying it down again;—“run away, run away this instant; how do I know but that you

may have the fever? you slept in the same room with Emily—fly, child! fly! and order the chariot—I won't ride in the coach, for Emily was in it last night."

In half-an-hour the tender mother, who had so lately declared she had no pleasure on earth unless it was shared by the darlings of her soul, was on the road to Hampstead, putting her head first out of one window, and then out of another, to inquire for elegant lodgings. Emily was raving in delirium, and Caroline weeping in her father's arms; afraid to go near her sister's apartment, and yet not desiring to accompany her mother, whose unkind repulse still felt heavy on her heart, and forced her to consider the difference then exhibited between the conduct of her sister Olivia, now watching the sick-bed of Emily with the tenderest concern, and that of her mother, who had fled from her own child, on the first appearance of danger. She began now to find there was *indeed* a difference between the pursuit of pleasure and happiness—of that love which offers the gratification of an hour, and that affection which is ever seeking the permanent advantage of its object; she felt conscious in how many instances she had lately slighted that good sister, to whom she could look in the hour of distress, and to whom *she* might be shortly driven for those kind offices her

sister now experienced. The longer her heart contemplated this picture, the more she was melted and overcome by it; her personal fears vanished before her sense of virtuous humanity, as exhibited by Olivia, whom she now thought handsomer and more engaging than any other person in the circle of her acquaintance; and as the minds of youth frequently dart from one extreme to another, being governed by impulse rather than reason, she sat down the moment her father left her, and wrote a note to Olivia, in which she requested her permission to visit Emily, and share in the task of waiting upon her.

The considerate sister did not permit Caroline to endanger her health by acceding to this request; but she failed not to praise the offer in such a way as to awaken the sisterly affection of Caroline, well aware that nothing has a greater tendency to eradicate the seeds of selfishness and vanity than the exercise of good-will towards others. She was extremely anxious to turn this affliction to the benefit of these dear children in every possible way: they were both blessed with good understandings and pleasant tempers, although the elder was rather too volatile; but it was evident that improper indulgence had already tended to debase the one, and would doubtless pervert the other, since pride and vanity have a

natural tendency to make the possessor selfish ; and selfishness is the mother of ingratitude, unkindness, disobedience, and dishonesty—faults which render us not only unamiable, but wicked, and are alike offensive to God and man.

In the course of a few days, Mrs. Mortimer, finding that her elder daughter had not evinced any symptoms of her sister's disorder, wrote a note to Mr. Mortimer, indicating her permission that Caroline might come to her at Hampstead, provided she did not come near her apartment for the first day or two. The father instantly acquainted her with the contents of this note, under the idea that it would convey great satisfaction ; but, to his surprise, she answered, "I am much obliged to mamma for her permission, but I had rather stay at home, for I can hear how Emily is going on every hour of the day here ; and I hope I am of some little use to *you*, papa."

"My dear child," said the delighted father, "you are indeed of great use to me, for you enliven my evening hours very much ; but I am afraid you are dull without your mother, as you have lately been in habits of seeing so much company, and we have no visitors now : there is a fever in the house, you see, Caroline."

"That is true, *indeed*," returned she, with a sigh ; "and after the first day, when I was too much

alarmed to feel anything but fear for myself, and sorrow for Emily, I *did* suppose I should be wretchedly weary; but I don't know how it is, somehow what with writing notes to Olivia, and reading her answers, which always contain something that renders me a little busy, or sets me thinking, the time passes on till I see you, and then I *have* company, you know, papa."

As Caroline spoke the last words she blushed, from the consciousness that she never had considered her father *company* till lately; yet had found in fact more pleasure in his society than any she had experienced of late; for, like all other children brought prematurely forward, she had been treated one hour with flattery, and the next with neglect. She had observed that in those very circles where the "dear young ladies" were most admired by some, there were others who wished Mrs. Mortimer had kept her girls at home; and in more instances than one had perceived that the same face which had welcomed her with a smile when she was presented by mamma, had surveyed her with a sneer the moment her mother's back was turned. Although she had been taught by that mother to impute this mode of conduct either to caprice or envy, she had too much sense not to feel that the approbation of her father, who loved her, was more valuable than the flattery of

people who admired her one minute and despised her the next. During this happy cessation in the habits of dissipation, Caroline thus recovered in some measure the use of her understanding, and the habits of exertion so necessary for young people, under the management of a sister who divided her cares between the two, though she still remained in the apartment of one only. Emily, by a more severe process, was weaned from frivolous and baneful pursuits, by a disorder which did not in her case assume its most menacing form, but was particularly painful and tedious, as she had several distressing relapses : she experienced from her eldest sister such unremitting care, such tender attention, that her whole heart was won by her goodness. The kind lessons imbibed previous to their separation regained their influence in her heart ; and she desired recovery more for the sake of telling Caroline how much they had both been mistaken in attributing unnecessary austerity to their affectionate sister, than any other thing. But the poor invalid was deprived of this satisfaction, as Mrs. Mortimer, having soon exhausted the pleasures of her new situation, sent again for Caroline, saying that she wished for her company ; and her indulgent husband therefore desired the child would set out immediately. She found her mother wearied and disgusted with everything

around her, impatient and fretful at the protracted illness of her child, rather than sorry for her lengthened sufferings, and appearing to think herself the only person who was really to be pitied in the case. When Caroline witnessed this conduct in her mother, and felt the effects of it in the ill-temper she assumed towards *her*, even when she was doing her best to amuse her, she could not help contrasting it with the conduct of her father under similar circumstances, and confessing to her own heart that it was so much pleasanter to live with the one than the other ; that the old adage of Olivia was verified, which said, it was better to be good than handsome ; for love is far preferable to admiration.





## VI.

### The Faithful Teacher.

"Delightful task to rear the tender thought."—THOMSON.



HEN Emily at length arose from the bed of sickness she was ordered by her physicians a long residence in the country, as the only means of restoring her health ; and thus the wishes of Olivia were in a great measure accomplished ; for Mrs. Mortimer gladly accepted the offer of Olivia of taking the invalid into Berkshire, as she was still fearful of infection, and wished them to leave her house in London before she returned thither.

This request struck Emily as being very unkind ; but Olivia made the best excuse for it in her power, only lamenting that poor Caroline was included in the prohibition ; being convinced from her letters that her heart yearned to embrace her sister. It was, however, happy for both that

the desired interview did not take place ; for Emily, still very languid, and fearful of what she considered a species of banishment, would have met with a bad counsellor in Caroline, whose temporary abode at Hampstead, imbibited by her mother's ill-humoured dejection, which she had concluded arose from the country, would have taught Emily to dread leaving the metropolis more than she did, lest the same effect should follow—so pernicious is the idea produced in the youthful mind by an improper association, and by substituting artificial pleasures for the simple and natural gratifications of peace and innocence.

"My dear sister," said Emily, when she had resided a few days at her new abode, "how many months do you think it will be necessary for me to remain here, in order to regain my strength ? "

"Not *many*, my dear, for you look better already."

"Then we shall return, I hope, in August or September."

"If you wish to leave this place in July, I dare say you may do it with safety ; but I shall not accompany you, for I am partial to the country."

"How very odd that is !" said Emily, with a sigh ; for she felt as if it were impossible to quit one to whom she owed so much, and yet more

impossible to live in a place where, when her tasks were ended, she had nothing to do.

Olivia read the sigh—she ordered the carriage, (for, principally on Emily's account, she had hired one for the summer,) and they set out for an airing, saying, she had not yet shown her the beauties of the neighbourhood, which she now endeavoured to do in the most agreeable manner.

“Yes—very pretty—all very pretty, certainly,” said Emily, yawningly; “it puts one in mind of the Panorama, and I have seen paintings in the British Gallery, of rocks, and trees, and streams, like these; but there is nobody here to admire them—nobody at all.”

“We shall see living creatures by-and-by, Emily.”

“Ah! they are the *best* pictures. I remember Lady Gamboge talking a great deal about cottage scenery, and being quite in raptures with the interior of a hut; and mamma said she was an elegant creature, and all she said was the rage; so I have wished to see the inside of a hut ever since, though, if she had not said so much about it, I should have thought the interior of York Cathedral a much finer thing, which hung close beside it.”

“And I am certain, as an object of beauty, I should have agreed with you, Emily; but I am



**THE COTTAGE DOOR.**

Page 69.



really glad that you adopted her ladyship's taste, as I can gratify you in the one case, and could not in the other.—See, there are three cottages, very picturesque ones, too, for they are nearly in ruins : we will go into them ; and remember that although Lady Gamboge is not here to direct your admiration, or extol your taste, though no crowds of well-dressed people are standing round, before whom you might be glad to exhibit admiration or affect feeling, yet there is an Eye upon us, Emily, before whom all these gay people, however decked by fashion, or distinguished by rank, are of no more importance than the inhabitants of these humble cottages.”

Emily had just risen from the bed of sickness, and her heart readily acknowledged this truth, as she followed the steps of her sister, who alighted as soon as she beheld the cottages, and walked towards them.

Some children were playing at the door of the first, who said their mother was gone into the second, because their neighbour was very unwell that morning ; the third was in too ruinous a condition to be inhabited.

Miss Mortimer, seeing the door of the middle house half open, ventured to enter it, and there beheld a poor man nearly ready to faint, supported between two women, who appeared to have raised

him from a wretched bed in the corner : he was pale and emaciated, worn down by sickness. A girl about nine years old was holding the door open in the inside for air, for the sick man ; and another about seven stood near the fire-side with two little brothers, whom she endeavoured to pacify, lest their complaints, loudly expressed, should disturb the suffering father. One of the women was evidently the wife of the sick man, from the paleness and solicitude of her countenance : on that of the other was impressed the most generous compassion, blended with an air of dejection which seemed to say—“ I have the *will*, but not the *power*, to help you.”

Emily shuddered. “ Is this,” said she, “ the interior of a cottage ? I thought the people were ruddy laughing rustics ; but this poor man is sick and ill, just as I have been ; but, alas ! how differently situated !” Her compassion overcame every other sensation—she rushed past Olivia, and inquired “ what was the matter with the poor man, and whether he had had the scarlet fever.”

The neighbour informed her he had been long suffering under a fever, which the doctor called nervous : but the fever had left him now, and he was sinking for want of support.

“ He should take a great deal of Port wine,”

said Emily, with the air of a person whom experience had given a right to judge.

*“ Wine, Miss ! where can we get wine ? a little good broth, or a drop of ale now and then, would quite set him up ; but, dear heart, I cannot get that now.”*

As the poor woman thus spoke, a little boy of three years old pulled her gown vehemently, crying, “Mother, mother, I want my porridge !” while his brother, a little older, struck by the appearance of the stranger, seemed anxious to restrain him. The sick man gave a look of such bitter anguish, as he looked towards the child, that it spoke a volume of suffering ; and Emily’s heart smote her for the words she had uttered—she burst into tears.

Olivia had slipped out unperceived to the carriage, in which, with her usual care, she had placed a bottle of cordial julep, which Emily was in the habit of taking occasionally, and some biscuits which she had intended for a lunch, in case they prolonged their ride. She immediately gave the poor man a dose of this restorative medicine ; while Emily, snatching the biscuits, distributed them to the boys, who seized them with the eagerness of extreme hunger. Whilst she was doing this, Olivia had drawn a bottle of eau-de-luce from her pocket, and was rubbing the temples of

the invalid with it. He became much revived, and turning to his wife, said, " My dear Sally, I thought all was over, but this good lady has brought me back to thee again."

" May God for ever bless her!" said the woman, bursting into tears of sincere tenderness and gratitude.

Olivia now inquired more particularly into the nature of the case, and was informed by the good-natured neighbour that poor John Saunders, the person in distress, was a worthy, industrious man, who not only had maintained his own family in comfort ever since his marriage, but his parents also, who had resided in the adjoining cottage until lately. His father had been paralytic many years, and had only died the preceding autumn ; and his mother, in waiting upon him, during his last sickness, had contracted a painful illness, which had doubled the burden of her son, as he could not bear to see her want any relief in his power to procure; in consequence of which he had contracted debts, and in order to pay them, had worked so hard, and so far abridged himself of his accustomed food, that his disorder became the natural consequence of his exertion : that his poor wife had been incessantly employed in waiting on their afflicted mother, till within the last month, when her death had left her the still more

melancholy task of nursing her husband, who, during that time, had lingered on the scanty provision made by the parish officers, which was not equal to find food for his infants.

This melancholy detail was scarcely finished, when Olivia's servant entered with a large basket of necessaries, for which she had despatched him. The sight of delicate and nutritive food, a warm blanket, and clean linen, seemed to revive the patient into new life, whilst his fond and grateful partner could scarcely refrain from throwing herself in ecstasies at the feet of her benefactress, though she was utterly unable to express her gratitude otherwise than by tears and gesticulations; and Emily so far partook their feelings, as to be sensible how much more worthy Olivia was of admiration than any of the splendid triflers to whom she had been accustomed to apply the epithets of charming, fascinating, and exquisitely beautiful.

Emily would not at this moment have shrunk from any circumstance which assimilated her with Olivia. She sank into her arms, and in broken accents thanked her for having made her the witness of a scene she should never forget; and lamented that she had hitherto been unworthy of her excellent preceptress.

All violent feelings must necessarily soon sub-

side, so far as they are violent; but the judicious nurse of virtue in the breast will not suffer the impression to be lost. On their return home Olivia busied herself in cutting out clothes—not only for the children of John Saunders, but those of his worthy neighbour; and Emily made them. Her heart was engaged in the work. She pursued it with avidity proportioned to the ardent benevolence excited, every means proving how deeply she was interested; and from this time not only forgot that the country was dull, but found innumerable beauties spring around her, which she imputed to the advancing season, but might with more justice have placed to the advancing state of her own awakened feelings and improved perception of excellence.

Her studies were at this time enlivened by an acquaintance she had formed with the curate's second daughter, who was exactly of her own age, and a sweet tempered, docile girl. Mr. Berryl, the worthy man who officiated as minister in the village nearest to Miss Mortimer's residence, on the pitiful stipend of sixty pounds per annum, contrived, with the assistance of his excellent wife, to bring up five children. The first two were daughters, and the eldest being of great use to her mother, Mr. Berryl did not think it right to take her from the domestic course of life in which

Mrs. Berryl generally employed her; but the second he wished to educate in such a manner as to enable her to provide for herself by teaching others. As he had not the means of procuring any masters in music and drawing, his plan was nearly frustrated, when the arrival of Miss Mortimer revived his scheme, and gave it effect beyond his most sanguine hopes; for she soon formed an intimate acquaintance with Mrs. Berryl, which led to a thorough knowledge of the wants and wishes of the family. Olivia left no means in her power untried to contribute to their comfort, grieved to observe how scantily they were provided with even the necessaries of life, at a time when the increasing wants of their young family were making the strongest claims on their care.

Mr. Berryl resided at the parsonage-house, the incumbent of the living permitting this for his own convenience, as he regularly came down once a year; but he was far advanced in life, and became almost unequal to this exertion. On his annual visit this year, Miss Mortimer was treated by him with the most marked respect, as a lady whose father moved in the first circles. He spoke much of Lord Littledale, who was the patron of his living, and the old gentleman appeared to attach high consequence to people of

rank and all who were any way connected with them; which for a short time revived the dormant vanity of Emily, who was observed by Olivia to treat Maria Berryl with less politeness, or, rather, less *kindness*, than she was accustomed to use before the arrival of the vicar.

“I am afraid, Emily,” said she, “that, notwithstanding the just admiration and regard you have so often professed for your young companion, if you return to London, her modest virtues, and even her talents, will be no longer remembered, when you are enabled to form an acquaintance with girls of a different rank in life, though far her inferiors in true excellence.

“Why should you think so, sister? I love Maria very dearly, I am sure;—I do not profess more than I feel *now-a-days*.”

“Probably; but you have lately allowed yourself to encroach upon her good-nature for many little services, which you have received rather as a matter of course than obligation, as if to remind her of the difference between you in point of fortune—a proof that you are admirably prepared for yielding implicit deference yourself to the capricious dictates of those above you; for the mind that is capable of taking advantage in one case is equally pliable in the other. I am sure you must have observed this in the little inter-

course you have had with the world. Pray, recollect whether I am right or not."

"I must confess I have not behaved kindly to Maria. I will, if you please, go and call on her this evening. The vicar was to leave them this morning, which is, I suppose, the reason why we have not seen her to-day."

"We will go in the first place and see John Saunders, for I find he has been at work again, and I am afraid of his venturing out to soon. Our conversation may be desultory; but if it serve to set the mind to work, salutary effects may be expected, for it is almost impossible to *think*, without *thinking* to some valuable purpose. For that reason I am always surprised that any person should dispute the good that may be derived from the *silent* meetings of the Friends, or Quakers, as they are foolishly called; I have frequently sat a few hours in their meeting-houses in town, and found them even at those times very edifying."

"But," said Emily, hesitatingly, "do *young* Quakers think, Olivia? I am sure I always find it very difficult to think, without speaking on the subject of my thoughts."

They speak *after* they have thought, instead of *before*, which is the reason they generally express themselyes with so much ability and eloquence, and frequently with so much wit."

*“Ability, wit, eloquence, in a Quaker! dear Olivia, how you surprise me! I never heard one speak, but I concluded, from their prim dress, that they were amazingly stupid, though I always thought them very good, since you told me how Mrs. Fairbank went about to seek poor children to put them into the school of industry, and relieved their parents at the same time; that Mrs. Smith, though so pretty and clean, nursed a sick family with her own hands, and dressed the poor dirty babes in linen of her own making.”*

“You shall hear, Emily, how far I am right: This very Mrs. Fairbank was requested one day, in my hearing, by a woman of fortune, to put a little girl, who was taken to help her maid, into the school of industry, which this benevolent Quaker had instituted: turning to the lady, with a look in which firmness and gentle complacency were admirably blended, she replied thus: ‘The school was instituted for the relief of the *miserably* poor, the *wretchedly* ignorant; I am persuaded no human being under thy protection can be so situated; of course thy servant is inadmissible.’ Now, Emily, can you conceive reproof more delicately administered, or denial given in a milder form?”

“Certainly not; but the Quakers study the art of denial, both to themselves and others, I have a notion, except where charity is concerned.”

“ You are a prejudiced child ; but I will now give you a specimen of compliment in a Quaker, and in a case where its sincerity could not be doubted. I was one day present when Mrs. Smith was apologizing to a person, whom she had promised to visit, for delaying her engagement. She had hold of her husband’s arm at the time, and on parting from the lady in question he said to her —‘ Farewell ! I am sorry for thy disappointment, friend, for as I best know the value of my wife’s company, I can most justly estimate thy loss.’ Pray, Emily, did you ever hear a better-turned eulogium, *en passant*, from any man of fashion, at our house in town all last winter ?”

“ No, indeed. I confess Mr. Liffington himself, nor even Lord Strondale, who makes all the new songs, could not have said a prettier thing in effect ; —but how odd to think of your being with such people, when we were perhaps having a rout at home ! I am glad you are not always shut up in your own dressing-room, Olivia, however.”

“ It is a rare case that I am *not* ; but even there I have the best of company ; so never mourn for me, my dear.”

“ Books, I suppose you mean, sister.”

“ Yes, books and thoughts, which have at least the negative merit of not exposing me to the stares of insolence, the sneers of contempt, and the ac-

cusation of intruding myself, as the daughter of a private gentleman, into the company of my superiors ; nor of running me into debt, and thereby denying me not only the power of assisting my suffering fellow-creatures, but the indulgence of those rational amusements to which my fortune, properly expended, entitles me, and that independence which is its best gift. Every creditor, whatever his rank in life, has always a hold on the comforts of those indebted to him, which is extremely irksome to a delicate mind and an honest heart. Nor am I obliged to witness gambling, which is a species of avaricious pursuit, for which I have a decided contempt ; or listen to scandal, for which I have an utter detestation. Thus, you see, my dear Emily, I gain as much as I lose, and am by no means entitled to the compassion you have so uselessly bestowed on me."

Emily, after a long pause, in which she appeared to think on some painful subject, said, " I always thought running in debt a very disagreeable thing ; Caroline and I used to have many conversations about it ; because creditors are very troublesome and hard-hearted ; and I find you think it not only unpleasant, but almost wicked ; yet many genteel people do it—now this puzzles me, Olivia."

" It is very natural to be puzzled at *your* age, Emily, for the madness and folly of such conduct

appear unaccountable at *mine*; I must, however, correct your ideas with respect to the notion of *creditors* being hard-hearted. Amongst people of fashion, the *hard-hearted* are decidedly of the other party, who, to gratify short-sighted selfishness by a vain display of splendour to which they have no pretensions, or to pursue some project of ambition, or even avarice,—to rival a friend, out-show an enemy, or indulge in the grosser appetites,—will distress without mercy the unhappy manufacturer, or the industrious artisan, by taking such credit as he is utterly unable to bear. By that means they force him to distress the people who are dependent upon him for bread for their starving families; many a fine lady thus ‘grinds the faces of the poor,’ as the Scripture terms it, who would be quite shocked at the idea of wanting sensibility; and there have been instances of compassionate women of quality, visiting the abodes of wretched objects that have been recommended to their notice, who found on inquiry that they had actually been reduced entirely by their own means.”

“ But, however shocking the circumstance, as it is evident they were ignorant of the mischief they had done, one cannot think them *exceedingly* to blame, Olivia: I dare say they were ladies who were perpetually engaged, and therefore never looked into these affairs at all.”

“ Wilful ignorance is no excuse for sins of this, or any other kind, Emily ; people are never so lifted above the common cares of life as not to know so nearly their actual income, as to be under a necessity of proportioning their expenditure to such income. Women of the first rank have done it ; and, in fact, many *are* doing it at this very time, with a propriety that fully proves wherever there is a true sense of justice, an upright intention, and virtuous principle, there will be a conformity of character. Such people will find time for the discharge of their duties, however various and multi-form ; nor will they think that giving a sum of money in a fit of generosity, or even feeling compassion at the sight of distress, will exonerate them from the claims which common honesty ought to have upon them in the first place ; for justice is paramount to every other claim, although charity treads hard upon its heels. So long as a man is in debt he has nothing to give till his creditors are satisfied, since in doing so he robs them of what is justly theirs ; he is obliged to repress the yearnings of compassion in his own heart, and the solicitations of his distressed brethren, in order that he may fulfil his duty to those whose sufferings are probably either nearly or remotely as great as those he is called on to pity. If he does not do this, however we may refine on the matter,

he is a dishonest, unjust man, and an unworthy, mischievous member of society ; his sensibility is perverted, his example bad, and his conduct to be deprecated the more, because it is extremely apt to mislead the young and inexperienced, who are subject to mistake dazzling actions for solid virtues. The widow's mite, given to one poorer than herself, when she has paid honestly for her poor lodging and her scanty morsel, is worth ten thousand such offerings at the shrine of either public or private feeling ; for it is not only the gift of compassion, but of self-denial, which is the touchstone of virtue."

Emily reflected deeply on these words, and they fell as good seed on her heart, for she dearly loved the speaker, who always delivered her sentiments, however decidedly, yet with a look of so much benignity, and in a tone of so much persuasive mildness, and whose actions so perfectly accorded with her words, that it was impossible not to be impressed with their importance, and at least form a temporary resolution to abide by their direction.





## VII.

### The Curate's Blessing.

“The very chamber where the good man lies  
Is privileged beyond the common walk  
Of virtuous life.”

YOUNG.

THE conversation related in the last chapter brought the sisters to the house of poor Saunders, which they entered without ceremony; and found the “interior of a cottage” made so very different by their prompt and judicious benevolence, that every trait of solemnity was instantly banished from the face of Emily, who gazed with delight on the scene before her. On the one side sat the good woman of the house spinning, with her youngest daughter knitting beside her; the eldest was preparing the supper for the family. The late invalid, though still pale and thin, wore the looks of convalescence: his youngest boy stood between his knees, learning his alphabet, whilst the elder

sat on the floor by his feet, making a spindle for his mother; all wore looks of cheerfulness and health—all were employed and happy.

The family were all moved at the sight of their benefactress, who had been prevented, by the general delicacy of her health and the badness of the weather, from visiting them in person for several weeks: the children gave a cry of joy; the master of the house rose respectfully, with delight in his eyes; whilst his wife, after several unsuccessful efforts to welcome them, burst into tears of joy, and wept aloud.

The honest husbandman apologized for his good wife by saying she had not quite recovered from the weakness brought on by their state of long suffering, previous to the time the good lady first found them, and it made her spirits rather “ticklish loike.”

“I be zure,” said the poor creature, sobbing, “so I be, that I be happy past all things to zee madam here again; but, zumhow, when I thinks what a condition zhe fund us in, all dying for want, and that zhe came, zent by God himself, to raise us all up again, as it were, my heart feels ready to break wi’ joy and thankfulness to see her blessed face again; and sweet Miss Emmy looking zo brave too, just as if zhe was rewarded with health for her goodness to us.”

When Emily recollected how feeble she was when she first entered this cottage, contrasted with the strength which now braced her limbs and bloomed in her cheeks, she accorded gratefully with the idea, and joined with the humble inhabitants in giving praise to Him who had bestowed to them alike the "garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness :" some of the sweetest moments of her existence were again spent in this cottage ; and she departed with a heart deeply impressed with that sense of Divine goodness which arises from compassion and devotion blended in the bosom of unaffected feeling.

They left this family, followed by its blessings and prayers, and bent their steps to the parsonage, which was very little out of their way. They felt some little surprise that Maria did not meet them, as she was wont, at the gate of the garden which led to the house ; and Emily had more than ever a degree of pain for having cooled the warm heart of her companion. Her sensations were rendered more poignant when, on entering the house, she found that Maria's absence was occasioned by the indisposition of her father, who was seated in a great chair, labouring under a severe cold and sore throat, which threatened to prove a quinsy of the most malignant kind ; and surrounded by his anxious family, whose silent motions

and trembling glances bespoke the extreme anxiety under which they laboured.

Mr. Berryl was a man of such sincere piety, so fitted, not only by religious knowledge and moral excellence, for the station he held in society, but even by nature itself, which had formed him at once meek and active, gentle and vigilant, that no person could be found more likely to conciliate the good-will and reverence of all around him, and "run with patience the race that was set before him." Accordingly he was held in the most affectionate esteem by all his flock, and in his own family beloved to enthusiasm; especially by his faithful partner, who was every way worthy of *him*, and calculated to fulfil the arduous duties assigned to her in the management of their scanty store. She was now in a state of agitation she was ill able to suppress, and sincerely rejoiced to see Miss Mortimer, whose powers, as a village doctress, were well known; for although the apothecary had just left her, she was, with the solicitude all must feel for an object of so much moment, anxious to hear every prescription, and listen to every one's advice, yet looking continually to God for his blessing on every means pointed out for the relief of her beloved husband.

Olivia gave the best directions in her power, and, having done so, withdrew, conscious that as

she could not benefit the patient it was better not to crowd his room, and earnestly entreating the children not to go near it more than was necessary.

To do nothing in a case of this kind is the only task which friendship finds severe, until it has learned to forego its own wishes. Emily loved Mr. Berryl ; he had been her instructor in many things, and her kind friend in everything ; and she really wished that she might have been permitted to assist Maria and her eldest sister in nursing him ; so that she returned home very reluctantly, regretting every step that she was not of an age to be useful to one she so highly valued. Olivia, though sorry to see her suffer, was yet pleased with her humility and sympathy ; and did not seek to interrupt a course of feeling natural and beneficial to her.

The next morning they were distressed to find that Mr. Berryl continued extremely ill. Towards noon Miss Mortimer went over herself, and found that the accounts she had received were not exaggerated. The disease, with that rapidity for which it is remarkable, had assumed its most terrible aspect. A physician had been sent for, and arrived during her visit, and confirmed the fears expressed by the apothecary, that unless relief was obtained in the course of the evening, death

would inevitably ensue—a sentence which ran through the distracted family like the stroke of lightning ; and the horror and distress which pervaded every mind was beyond conception. He only on whom it was passed, and who read it in the distressed looks of his wife and children, was enabled to endure the awful shock ; and, casting all his cares for them and for himself at the feet of his Divine Master, to say, “Behold thy servant —be it unto me according to thy will.”

Miss Mortimer could not think of leaving poor Mrs. Berryl till the arrival of her sister, for whom she despatched her servant. On the arrival of this person she returned home, desiring them to consider her every way at their service, though it was evident to all that the shock her kind heart had sustained in its sympathy with them had rendered her unequal to any personal exertion. On her return she found that society which of all others was best calculated to restore her tranquillity ; this was the family of the St. Faires, who, having arrived the day before at Mr. Lewis's, had driven over to see her, accompanied by their son, a fine boy about three years older than Emily, named Alfred. He was the godson of Olivia, but had not been seen by her for several years. A Mr. Monson, who was the visitant of Mr. Lewis, had likewise come over ; so that Emily, on her sister's arrival

at home, was surrounded with company, and doing the honours of the house in a manner so attractive to Mr. Monson, who was a mere country gentleman, that he was quite delighted with her, and paid her so many compliments as almost to overset poor Emily's new-gained wisdom—so much mischief may be done in a little time by foolish people.

When, however, Emily perceived, by the pale cheeks and red eyes of her sister, how things were going on at the parsonage, her heart instantly sunk, and with a trembling voice she asked her what the physician had said. On learning the state of the good man, and the distress of his family, she burst into an agony of tears, and left the room, to which she did not return till dinner was announced, when, fearful of grieving Olivia by her absence, she crept into the room, robbed of all that vivacious politeness she had displayed, and sat down with the air of one who is struggling to assume cheerfulness for the sake of those around her; and fancying she cut a sad figure with her swollen cheeks, felt somewhat surprised at finding herself addressed with great kindness by Alfred St. Faire, whom she had hitherto considered little better than a country booby, because he had taken so little notice of her at the time when Mr. Monson had evidently admired her so much.

This gentleman was one of those people who are very fond of relating long tedious tales, especially anything in which they have borne a part themselves; and when the cloth was drawn, he prepared to indulge himself in his favourite amusement; but Miss Mortimer and her old friends had not met for so long a time, that he found it in vain to gain any audience but the young ones, to whom he therefore addressed himself thus:—

“I am quite sorry, my pretty dear, to see you take on, and fret so about this poor parson of yours, who, I don't doubt, will do very well in time, or if he die, you may get as good a one in his stead; but, however, that's neither here nor there; I dare venture to lay my chestnut mare to a blind jack-ass, that, when I was in Wales last year, I had a worse sore throat than his.”

“And what cured you, sir?” said Emily eagerly.

“Why, Miss, that's the very thing I was going to tell you.”

He then proceeded in the most circumstantial manner to give all the particulars of his case to Emily, concluding with a declaration that the application of hops,\* in large quantities, produced suppuration in his throat, at a time when he was in the most imminent danger, and describing the

\* The hops thus applied should be those which have been used, and have partly spent their strength.—*Author's Note.*

method of fomentation with a minuteness that would have been disgusting to the highest degree to a person less interested than Emily ; but she heard him with such rapt attention and profound deference to the end of his story, that he was convinced she was a paragon of good sense ; but just as he opened his mouth to tell her so, she vanished from his sight.

It struck Emily, that in returning from the parsonage the night before, she had passed a house where the maid was preparing her brewing vessels at the door ; she therefore hastened out of the house by the back door, and flew to the spot, and was regaled with the sight of a large sieve of smoking hops : she instantly bade the servant carry them to the house of Mr. Berryl, and running forward herself in great agitation, related what the stranger had said, and requested their immediate application ; declaring that if she were permitted, she could apply them herself.

The drowning catch at straws ; Mrs. Berryl and her sister eagerly embraced a prescription which, at all events, could not hurt the patient, whose breathing now became every moment more laborious, and to whom all speech had been denied some hours, but whose upraised eyes and placid countenance bespoke that communion with Heaven which was opened when all earthly com-

fort was closed upon him, and which sustained him in this trying hour.

In answer to Emily's urgent entreaties, she was admitted to his bedside, and assisted Mrs. Berryl and her daughter to apply the fomentations. Her heart beat with quickness, and she trembled with alternate hope and apprehension. Everything around her contributed to excite this feeling in the most vivid manner : the revived hopes of the children ; the despair of her aunt, who had learnt more from the medical attendant than he would confide to the family ; and the agonies depicted in the speaking countenance of a wife at such a dreadful period, when more than life was suspended on the present moment, and who beheld her one moment as the herald of hope, and the next with dismay—who struggled for resignation, but found only misery ;—all together pressed upon her mind in such a manner as to make this a scene of much greater interest than she had ever been engaged in before. Even whilst she bent beneath the pain it inflicted, she felt as if her life had been bestowed for the express purpose of enduring it. In silent and breathless expectation she sat waiting for the issue, endeavouring by mental prayer to gain courage to endure the worst, while in humble faith she supplicated for the life of one so inestimable to all around him.

An hour elapsed in this situation, and in that time the patient's breathing was evidently worse and his pain much greater. Mrs. Berryl's sister, conceiving that all relief was impossible, proposed to discontinue an application which evidently had done no good, and which might, by increasing the inflammation, add to the pain of the patient. To this Mrs. Berryl consented, with a look of such extreme despondency as bespoke the bitterness of her disappointment, and fell on the sinking heart of Emily as a tacit reproach. She recollected, just at this moment, that Mr. Monson had told her that he felt much worse just before the quinsy broke; and she mentioned this circumstance, entreating them by all means to renew the application. Mrs. Berryl would have taken her advice, but the other attendants positively rejected it. Emily was in agonies; she entreated, she besought them to apply it but *once* again; and at last her distress attracted the patient, who made signs that he would have it again. Emily saw that this was the last time that she should be indulged, and she determined one minute that she would run for her sister and Mr. Monson, who might persuade them to persist in it, but she durst not quit the room, lest her favourite prescription should be banished with her presence, as she saw very plainly that Mr. Berryl exposed

himself to increased pain rather in answer to her entreaties than from any faith in her medicine ; and this condescension rendered him necessarily more dear to her heart. She exhorted him, as well as she was able, to endure it ; told him over and over all that Mr. Monson had said ; and became so agitated that Mrs. Berryl and her friends deemed it highly improper to permit her continuance in the room, and at length insisted on her leaving it.

Emily could not endure this : she had so worked up her imagination, that she believed Mr. Berryl's life entirely depended on her stay ; and though she had, in the first instance, been severely afflicted with the sorrow of those around her, yet, since they had opposed her wishes, she had persuaded herself that they were not equally desirous to save him with herself ! It was now night, and several messages had been sent from her sister, but they were rather inquiries after the patient than *her* ; for Olivia had considerable reliance on her prudence, and could not doubt her delicacy, as she was naturally a modest retiring child, and had lately in a great measure resumed her native manners, especially when her heart was affected. She now determined, if she *must* leave him, to fetch her sister immediately, as one who would have more authority ; but the dread of what might

occur during her absence affecting her excessively, just as she was leaving the room she cast a look of bitter anguish towards the bed, accompanied with a motion of her arms, crying—"Oh, my dear sir, give me your blessing!" The patient, deeply affected, threw out *his* arms also, and making a violent effort to speak, the ulcer instantly broke in his throat, and for a few moments he was struggling with suffocation.

Mrs. Berryl dropped senseless on the floor; her sister sprang to her relief; while Emily, who was the only child that had been permitted to stay so long in the room, sprang upon the bed, and giving him a blow with all her little strength between his shoulders, he was instantly relieved by a copious discharge of the matter; and in a few moments breathed freely, and received the whey which his sister-in-law, amidst tears and ejaculations, now offered him.

Conscious of extreme weakness, notwithstanding the spring given to his spirits by sudden ease, Mr. Berryl durst scarcely allow himself to whisper words of congratulation to his scarcely recovered spouse, and accents of thankfulness to his God, ere he sought the repose so long denied him; but he was conscious *whose* was the hand appointed for his deliverance, and his eye looked in quest of her, followed by that of his wife. Shrouded by

the curtain at the foot of the bed, Emily was now pouring out her full heart at the mercy-seat of Divine grace in silent adoration. Her hopes, her fears, and her anger, were forgotten ; one sweet and holy sensation of calm and awful joy pervaded her heart, and shed tranquillity over her agitated bosom.

When Mrs. Berryl clasped her to her bosom, and thanked her by looks and kisses, and when the children below crowded round her, ere her return, to bless and thank her, she repelled not their tenderness by coldness ; but she was unable to reply to them, for the action of her mind on this eventful night appeared to have almost robbed her body of its usual strength. On arriving at home she found all the party remaining with her sister, except Mr. Monson, who was, in fact, the only person she now wished to see, as she felt the greatest desire possible to felicitate him upon the excellence of his prescription ; she contented herself therefore with briefly informing Olivia that there was now everything to hope for their dear friend ; and without referring to her share in his amendment she retired to her pillow, under the happiest consciousness that could tranquillize the heart and sweeten the slumbers of any human being.



## VIII.

### *The Wounded Spirit.*

'It may be laid down as an unfailing and universal axiom, that 'all pride is abject and mean.' "

JOHNSON.

MILY did not awake till late on the following morning ; and as Miss Mortimer was very early by the bedside of the invalid, and there learnt all that she had done the preceding evening, and perceived that with care there was no doubt of his speedy recovery, on her return she gave orders that Emily should not be disturbed, and gave her guests an account of the beneficial exertions the dear girl had made the preceding evening, during her absence from home.

Alfred St. Faire listened with great interest to this detail. He was now a tall unformed boy of about fourteen, with an intelligent countenance, warm heart, and excellent understanding, which having been cultivated at home by his parents, was advanced beyond his years ; but as he had

seen very little company, he did not appear to advantage on a first view, his manners being rather negatively inoffensive than prepossessing ; until his affections were won upon, when he was found frank and engaging in no common degree. The conduct of Emily, when with a self-possession uncommon, and in fact unnatural at her age, she had welcomed his mother and party with the manners of a finished woman, had amused him as a piece of acting, though it entirely failed in pleasing him ; but when he saw the girl he had regarded as an automaton exhibit marks of real feeling, his genuine sympathy was excited towards her ; and the further account he heard of her could not fail to awaken his more perfect approbation. Alfred was often accustomed to express his feelings in verse, and being well read in the Scriptures, and uniting with his poetical taste that fine religious sense which is generally combined with it, he could not help comparing the late situation of Emily and her simple prescription to Naaman's cure, and was thence led to write the following lines, which he left upon the breakfast-table, addressed to Emily :—

Not by the mouth of Judah's king  
Did God reveal the blest command,  
Which bade th' illustrious Pagan wing  
His steps to Zion's hallowed land,  
And humbly at Elisha's door  
The promised boon of health implore.

No! to a *little maid* was given  
The mission of distinguished grace;  
Thus made th' embassadress of Heaven,  
The patriot of her chosen race;  
Taught in a stranger's land to raise  
Her country's fame, her Maker's praise.

Thrice happy Emily! to you  
Was given like honours from above,  
The life of virtue to renew,  
And crown the plious prayer of love:  
A special herald from the skies,  
To snatch from Death his sacrifice.

When Emily read these lines she felt gratified and thankful; but her pleasure was of a very different kind from that feverish vanity which once actuated her. By mingling even her self-satisfaction with reference to religious feelings, she was taught to re-consider the affair, to see how much of human weakness had mingled with the better parts of her conduct, and to learn humility, even in the moment of exultation.

In a few days Mr. Berryl was enabled to see his friends, and converse freely on the subject of his illness; and though his heart naturally overflowed with love and gratitude towards his "village doctress," as he called Emily, yet he was too sincerely interested in her welfare to suffer himself to bestow any praise upon her which was either exaggerated in itself or had not an immediate reference to that providential interposition in his favour, of which she had become the happy

instrument. This salutary conduct promoted every desirable effect in her mind : it taught her gratitude to Heaven, and love to all around her, inspiring the consciousness of having attained such consequence in the career of virtue as to lessen all other fame in her eyes ; combined with such a sense of frailty, that she dreaded to lose the little already attained, and pressed forward with trembling, though not feeble steps, to higher virtues.

The family of St. Faire left Miss Mortimer's house under the most favourable impressions of a child for whom they had, in the first instance, felt symptoms of a very different nature. They remained the rest of the summer at Mr. Lewis's, and the two families were frequently together—that sincere esteem and warm regard which had so long subsisted between Olivia and Mr. St. Faire was a source of the sincerest happiness to both : he frequently thanked her for directing his views to his present lady, with whom he enjoyed a life of the most perfect happiness human nature is permitted to enjoy. This happiness had met, in the earlier part of their union, with much alloy, from the sickness and death of their three youngest children ; but time, and still more, submission to the Divine will, had now enabled them to resign their precious babes ; and in the health

and promising virtues of their eldest son they enjoyed the sweetest satisfaction. Under such circumstances, it was no wonder that they had not hitherto prevailed upon themselves to part with him ; but at the close of this summer they resolved that in a short time they would confide him to the care of a tutor, and permit him to pursue his studies at college, previous to which they intended to visit the metropolis, and wished to prevail on Olivia to accompany them thither,—a wish in which Emily very naturally joined.

Loath to exchange the quiet of her own abode, and still more to endanger the stability of Emily's improving character, Miss Mortimer wrote to her father a full account of her present situation, and determined to be guided entirely by his answer ; which answer accorded with her wishes, as Mr. Mortimer declared that he was so entirely of opinion that Emily was not only much better, but much happier, in her present situation, that however earnestly he wished to see both his daughters, he could not desire their removal, except for Caroline's sake. But she, he observed, having got a good governess, and being permitted by her mother to attend to her lessons, because it was fashionable for girls to be completely secluded for a year or two previous to their coming out, as it is called, all was going on in that quarter

pretty well at present, and would only be interrupted by a change.

Under these circumstances Emily was happily left for the two following years; in which time Mr. Mortimer had three different times paid Olivia visits in the country, being at one time accompanied by his lady, who with great difficulty prevailed on herself to stop one week on her road to Bath, partly for the purpose of seeing her daughter, and partly for that of obtaining from Olivia a loan of money, or more properly a gift, since she never thought of repaying it. She fancied that the retirement in which she lived must have enabled Miss Mortimer to lay up a little sum, which might have been very agreeably expended by her in the fashionable watering-place whither she was hastening: but unluckily for the lady's calculation Miss Mortimer had no such sum; for although her establishment was within the limits of her fortune, and her pleasures not expensive, yet they were of a nature to employ the remainder of her income, and seldom left her more than a small sum of ready money by her; and when Mrs. Mortimer, after giving many gentle hints, at length spoke her wants more fully, this was explained to her by Olivia.

"I can't conceive," said Mrs. Mortimer, pettishly, "what pleasures you can have in the

country to swallow up the remainder of your income: excuse me, Olivia, but you must have some mode of extravagance that has never entered my head ; I am sure I cannot perceive it either in your dress or that of Emily."

When Mrs. Mortimer was first married, it will be remembered that Olivia was scarcely of age ; she then united to a naturally frank and generous heart much of that liberality so common to her age, and gave with a profusion more suited to the rapacity of her mother-in-law's wishes than her own circumstances, and would, in fact, have thrown her whole fortune into her father's lap, if his generosity had permitted it. This he happily opposed ; and in the course of a very short time she was so fully convinced of the extreme extravagance and meanness of Mrs. Mortimer, that she began to direct her wealth into other channels, and by following the dictates of her benevolence, sometimes in the presence of Mrs. Mortimer, proved to her that she had some methods of disposing of money as well as herself. When the lady made this speech, she knew perfectly well what those amusements and pleasures were which Olivia enjoyed, but of which she chose to appear ignorant, that she might have an opportunity of ridiculing each particular instance of benevolence which came before her, and point out the stale doctrine,

continually broached by the mean and unfeeling, "That every person of this country is supported by the parish laws ; it is very wrong to encourage vagabonds, it is filling the country with thieves and beggars ;"—or, "Taking people out of their proper spheres in life ever does mischief," &c. ; and all these wise saws were already on the tongue of this extravagant gamestress, who had many a time betted as much money on the turn of a card, or the throw of a die, as would have found Olivia in charity-money for a twelvemonth, when she was a little disappointed by her answering thus : " You know I am fond of books, and being desirous of placing the best authors before Emily, now she is of age to understand history and natural philosophy, I have lately bought the best editions now publishing ; besides, the expense of her masters is very considerable, for as we reside at a great distance from any large town, I am obliged of course to pay for their journeys."

" A music-master is the only thing she needs, just to teach her a few graces, and they can be got only in town, you know ; and she must of course learn to dance there : so both may be taken together ; all other knowledge is quite superfluous to girls : to be sure these things are absolutely necessary, because they get them invited every where, and help them off. Several girls of our

acquaintance are married since you left London, with no other recommendation than good faces, fine voices, and a tolerable knowledge of music : to be sure there are a much greater number left on hand, poor things. But I don't know how it is, girls now-a-days don't understand the style that suits them : I hope my dear girls won't be such dolts when they get out—I'm sure I took pains enough to initiate them.

“ I do not know what you mean by the *style* that suits them ? ” said Olivia, questioningly.

“ I daresay *not*, for you are as completely rusticated here as if you were living among the Hottentots ; and I should be entirely wretched about Emily, if I had not lately seen an instance of a fine handsome girl quite as *outré* as her, and as full of grandmother notions, come up from the country ; and whilst all the women were laughing at her, actually ran away with a young nobleman, and twenty thousand a-year : at present, novelty is all the rage. The young beautiful Duchess of L—ds nurses her children, and says her prayers. Lady Caroline W—th—y, whose face rivals the portrait of her famous predecessor, resides at the family seat down in Yorkshire, pays her tradesmen with her own hands, and amuses herself with helping her husband to improve his estate, and assisting her housekeeper to make

caudle for all the sick in the village. But these are odd fancies, and may suit rich beauties of rank, who are privileged beings, and may do anything they like; but what I mean by *style* is this—girls ought to study what suits them best, who have their fortunes to make, and not indiscriminately to adopt either *l'allegro* or *il penseroso*; still less should they venture on being romps, or philosophers, unless they are well aware that it suits them exactly. It is the duty of prudent mothers to point it out to them; but some women are too careless to attend to these proprieties, and others err from false judgment. Now, how do you think Lady Tasteless brought out her two girls, at Mrs. Stanton's assembly last week?"

"I have no idea that she could bring them out improperly, if they were well dressed, and respectably introduced."

"Bless me, Olivia, you have no sense of *these* things at all! Who could believe you had ever been a beauty, with twenty thousand pounds! which twenty years ago was a monstrous pretty thing, and entitled a pretty woman to a place in society. Had I *had* it I should have been in a very different situation to what I now fill; but, however, I don't mean to reflect on your father—he's a worthy man, only too close; and covetous-

ness is the natural vice of age. We were speaking of Lady Tasteless. You must know her two girls are both handsome, but very different. Ellen takes after her father, is plump, round-faced with funny eyes, and a mouth that gives animation to her whole countenance, from its playful dimples. Her form is short, and most grievously *en bon point*. On the other hand, Louisa is tall, slender, with fine languishing eyes and a pale complexion, quite fit for a tragic Muse. And yet did their silly mother bring out these girls precisely the reverse of what nature and common sense intended! The gay Ellen was armed with a fine cambric hand-kerchief and a smelling-bottle, and performed the whole evening the character of 'a pensive nun devout and pure,' under pretext of a distressing head-ache, in order to look *interesting*; while poor Louisa, who is really labouring under a trifling indisposition, was under orders to shake the 'light fantastic toe' in every corner of the room, and to look smilingly 'with all her might,' by way of being charming. The consequence of this was just what might have been expected. At the very moment when Sir Hugh Dashwell was condoling with Ellen, and she ought to have answered him with dying softness, she burst into a horse-laugh at the grimaces of old Lord Hobbledown; and when Louisa, with extreme fatigue, having got

down the fourth dance, was assuring her partner that she 'trod on air,' she dropped on the floor in a fainting fit, and the thing being *really* a fit, you know, they were all obliged to go home together, and left everybody behind to laugh at them."

"Well, my dear ma'am, I hope your daughters will never run the risk of equal shame, by assuming any character at all, but such as really belongs to them—those of unpretending girls, with knowledge enough to understand their duty, and principle enough to practise it."

"These are subjects I never talk on, either to you or your father, Miss Mortimer; all I want to say is this, that if you discharge Emily's masters, and give me a draft on your banker for the money they would cost you, it will really be of service to me, now I am going to Bath; and I think the society I have introduced your father to, and the pains I take for the future establishment of your sisters, by forming the *first* connections, ought to give my *wants* and *wishes* some consideration in your eyes."

Olivia had been too much and too justly offended, by the manner in which her father's name had been introduced, to accede to the demand of a woman who, at the very moment she was abusing his liberality, wasting his fortune, and beggaring his children, could reflect upon him for

a fault it was his misfortune to be entirely devoid of: she therefore answered this appeal with a calm firmness she had never assumed before; and emptying the contents of her pocket-book upon the table, said, "Here are notes, ma'am, to the amount of about twenty pounds—they are all I have by me at present, and I am willing to divide them with you, if so small a sum will be of any use to you."

"I apprehend," said Mrs. Mortimer, rising with great dignity, "you have mistaken me for one of your village paupers, Miss Mortimer, and are presenting me with the means of purchasing winter blankets, or a fat pig for Christmas."

The colour rose to Olivia's cheek, and the recollection how thankfully even such a sum as *this* had been received by this lady before her marriage rushed to her memory; and she was about to speak in terms perfectly just, but not consistent with the respect she now deemed due to her. She therefore checked herself again, and observing, "that she was certain it was more wise to apply the money in the way Mrs. Mortimer had pointed out, than send it after the many larger sums which had preceded it," coolly put it in her pocket; and by so doing completely quenched the rising anger of the lady, who had merely meant to frighten her into compliance with her wishes. Considering

her a poor delicate little woman, whose nerves shrunk from contention of all kinds, she thought what could not be gained by fair means might be exacted by foul ones—that fear might grant what care denied; and being aware that a sum of money might soon be obtained by Olivia, whose credit was as good as her own was bad, she determined not to relinquish her point, so long as it was tenable. Having lately lost a larger sum of money than she had ever done before, she was become excessively anxious to obtain a fresh supply, in order that she might possess the means of playing for the recovery of the last: such is the eternal round of folly and vice necessity prescribes to the gambler, who, of all other sinners, seems the least able to say to his temptation, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.”

Mrs. Mortimer found, however, to her infinite chagrin, that she had passed the Rubicon of Olivia's generosity, as she termed it; for Olivia herself never called it by any other name than *weakness*, nor reflected upon it with any other feelings than as money misapplied or mis-spent; as although it had saved her father's pocket in some individual instances, it had not lessened his general expenditure; the wants of extravagance being like those of the horse-leech, which crieth continually, “Give, give;” and it is not only impossible to supply

them, but generally found that every indulgence adds fuel to the fire.

When Mrs. Mortimer found that nothing was to be gained from the firm though mild and persevering refusal of Olivia, she became impatient to commence her journey ; and after bestowing many severe sarcasms upon Sunday schools, a village lady Bountiful, learned ladies, petticoat reformers, and solitary blue stockings, not without great expressed pity, and implied contempt, for poor, little, crooked old maids, all of which fell harmless on the wise and gentle being for whom they were designed, she set off. When the tears were forgotten which the father justly claimed, the little family resumed their avocations, until the period already spoken of, when they were summoned to London by Mr. Mortimer, who, having had a severe attack from an inflammatory disorder, and being aware that it was but too likely to return, was desirous of seeing his children about him ; and without informing Olivia how indifferent his health really was, yet desired her so to arrange her affairs in the country as to permit her residence in town for the ensuing year.

Olivia in this requisition saw plainly that the heart of her poor father was even worse at ease than she had supposed ; and as Emily was now at an age when she might be spoken to with

propriety, Olivia gave her so far to understand what was the cause of an uneasiness she could not conceal, as to interest her much for her suffering parent, and induce such a train of reflections as would, she hoped, operate as a shield to her on her return to that scene of apparent gaiety and splendour which she was about to enter.

Although Emily was delighted with the idea of seeing her dear Caroline again, and naturally pleased with the thoughts of revisiting home, yet she was sensibly affected with parting from friends whose virtues had endeared them to her. She was known and beloved by every person in the immediate neighbourhood, and all lamented her departure as that of a daughter or a benefactress; for as the gifts of her sister generally passed through her hands, she was held by the poor in the light of a ministering angel. At the parsonage the loss of the sisters was most feelingly deplored, and especially by Maria, who, although she had now attained such a degree of improvement as enabled her to go on with each branch without immediate assistance, could not see the dear companion of her studies, and the generous friend who had assisted her in them, now divided from her without the most sensible grief: she had, in fact, almost resided under the same roof with them for so long a time that she appeared to be leaving

a second home ; and she was well aware that when they should return, she must in all probability be herself removed to a considerable distance.

But the sorrow of Mrs. Berryl appeared still more awakened than that of her daughter ; and as her eye glanced from Emily to her husband, it spoke all that was passing in her heart, of affection towards both. “ Oh, my dear Miss Emily,” she exclaimed, “ tell me, before you go, that you forgive my unkindness to you on that dreadful night when you were sent by Heaven to save us. I know I was unkind to you, though I never had the courage to speak of it before—but you knew my distress.”

Emily burst afresh into tears, and clasping Mrs. Berryl close to her heart, whispered, as well as she was able, “ That *she* only was to blame, and that she had wondered many a time they did not turn her out an hour before ; but,” added she, “ that is so long ago, we have, I am sure, mutually forgiven each other ever since—why should we name it now ? ”

“ Only to prove,” said Mrs. Berryl, with a smile, “ how necessary it is to be ever watchful over our conduct towards those we love, since it is plain that though they may, and *do* forgive us, yet if we are really worthy and affectionate, we are not able in such cases to forgive *ourselves*. ”



## IX.

### Light in Darkness.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not."—ECCLES. xii. 1.



N arriving in London, the two sisters were shocked to observe the great change visible in their father's appearance, and glad their journey had not been longer delayed; for although there was no symptom of any particular disease remaining in Mr. Mortimer at present, there was an appearance of age and debility of the most threatening aspect, and which was more perceptible to strangers than to those on whom it had stolen by slower degrees.

Caroline and Emily were both grown so much that they gazed on each other as strangers: they were much improved in their persons, but their countenances exhibited very different traits; discontent had warped the fine features of the once lively Caroline; and happiness relieved the bash-

fulness of the too timid Emily. On further examination, it was found that, by an error in education, common to those who commune much with the world, and little with their children, their own hearts, or the dictates of common feeling and common sense, Mrs. Mortimer had for the last eighteen months entirely changed her system of careless government for one of severe restriction. Caroline and her ill-fated governess had endured a privation amounting to imprisonment; for, under the idea of education becoming quite the rage, she had been doomed to have a succession of masters, and a variety of employment, to which common talents and exertions are utterly unequal; since whatever else might engage her attention, she was commanded to practise music at least four hours a day; besides which, she had for some months received lessons from French, Italian, and German masters; she was attended thrice a week by an artist of eminence, and twice by a posture-master to teach graceful attitudes; a subordinate actor taught her the graces of elocution, and a drill sergeant the art of walking; and her governess had received various lectures on the necessity of writing poetry, in order to become perfectly fashionable and *fascinating*—a term Mrs. Mortimer never forgot in her list of requisitions.

Many times had the good old father interceded

for the poor jaded girl, whose health and spirits sank beneath the intolerable toil ; but he was always answered with an assurance that nobody could appear in the world without all this string of learning and graces being attached to their names, as a title to public admiration. Though he sometimes seriously remonstrated against it, as an effectual means of damping all power of rational improvement, at others he endeavoured to laugh at it, maintaining that the best and cheapest way of procuring these manifold attainments would be to send Caroline to the seminary for young ladies in Tottenham Court Road, where thirteen accomplishments may be had for thirty pounds per annum. But all would not avail ; Caroline was to be educated now, not only for a beauty, but a *bel esprit* : she must not merely be a clever girl, but "a *divine* performer, an exquisite warbler, an enchanting dancer, and a painter of most exuberant genius," though not quite mistress of the *executive* part of the art. To all these graces she was condemned to add the vocabulary of botany, chemistry, and zoology ; and without a knowledge of anything, the boldness of pretending at every thing, which "makes the learned smile, and the unlearned stare."

The mind of poor Emily was absolutely bewildered by the Herculean labours of her sister's

system of education, and for some days she stood an admiring spectator of the awful process of the school-room ; but when her first terrors had abated, and she was enabled to exercise her cooler judgment on the subject, she perceived that poor Caroline, with much learning, gained little knowledge, and that the necessity of flying from one thing to another, in order to accommodate her various attendants, the dislike she had to many branches of study, and her general weariness of *all*, had prevented her from really advancing in any save music, in which she had attained great proficiency, and a sort of mechanical excellence, the necessary result of practice. This was purchased by such a prodigious expenditure of time, that her mind was, after all, unfurnished with any essential knowledge, her imagination bereft of vivacity, her language spiritless and barren, her heart unaffected, cold, and devoid of attachments.

Over this piteous picture the affectionate Olivia sighed deeply, but not hopelessly : she perceived that vanity was abated by the intenseness of application, and pride subdued from the difficulty of finding it food ; and though she foresaw that both would be speedily rekindled, when, bursting from these trammels, Caroline should be presented to the world in the character of an accomplished

beauty, and taught by her discerning though ill-judging mother to display, in the "style most suitable," the kind of attractions she sought to possess, yet she trusted before that period arrived some means might be found by which attentive friendship might awaken the dormant seeds of virtue in her heart, and by turning the little knowledge she possessed to proper account, save her from becoming that useless thing—a "heartless beauty." In the meantime her attentions seemed to be more particularly devoted to Emily, in whom she naturally appeared to possess a prescriptive right, and whose person, at least, it was allowed, had improved so much under her care, that even Mrs. Mortimer suffered Caroline to follow every means of health pointed out by Olivia, who, thus authorized, stole many of those hours unwillingly devoted to useless employment in regaining blooming looks and supple limbs, and invigorating a constitution naturally good, but at this time sinking into lassitude and laying the foundation for future suffering.

Mrs. Mortimer had not considered, in the plan she adopted with equal rashness and pertinacity, that had she at an early period designed her daughter for a literary character, and given her habits of application, those things which were now a severe task would have become mere play

to her ; instead of which, she took her from the salutary and useful routine of school business, dictated by Olivia, just at the time when it was most necessary to enforce it ; made her a premature fine lady for a year or two ; and then thrust her back into the nursery, to contend with all the ignorance of childhood and the vanity of youth, and condemned her to run through a course of instruction, in the three following years, which ought to have occupied at least a dozen during that period when the mind is most disengaged.

Olivia took advantage of the liberty given her for the improvement of Caroline's health, to study that of her mind also. She led her to the abodes of wretchedness—she awoke in her apparently torpid heart the feelings of humanity ; and although the sorrow witnessed in the metropolis was too often blended with proofs of guilt, and exhibited in characters of depravity, yet, as she was now of an age capable of being reasoned with, Olivia thought it right, for a good purpose, to show her the world as it really is, rather than to suffer her to remain a stranger to the great ends of her existence until that period when she would be plunged into a scene where her passions, called at once into action, might, by concentrating her affections, for ever destroy her happiness and ruin all that was excellent in her character.

From the contemplation of human wretchedness, and the meetings of compassion, which naturally soften the heart for the admission of divine truths, Olivia led her dear pupil to the contemplation of the Holy Scriptures, which had been, during her residence in the country, little better than a sealed book in the house, as Mr. Mortimer pursued his studies in the library, and Mrs. Mortimer insisted on the practice of sacred music occupying the regular time. Olivia explained the scheme of our redemption, and all its admirable fitness for the present relief and eternal welfare of beings so lost in misery and prone to sin as all around her appeared to be ; she expatiated, with all the feeling warmth of one who "knows on whom she hath believed," on the value of the Scripture promises, and the superior excellence of the Christian character ; she taught her to see how immediately pure faith is connected with perfect morality ; that the dignity of conscious integrity towards man, which exalts him above all meanness and servility, giving him a rank amongst his fellow-creatures compared to which all other distinctions are as the "dust in the balance," was perfectly compatible with that deep humiliation towards God prescribed by his Word, which considers man "as a fallen and sinful being," indebted solely to Divine mercy, as displayed in redeeming love,

for grace to support him through the trials and temptations of this world, and bestow upon his imperfect services the meed of unfading glory in the next.

Happily these lessons were not bestowed in vain : as Caroline received them under an impression of renovated health and happiness, they formed a part of the important comforts now bestowed upon her, and demanded her gratitude, as much from the pleasurable emotions combined with them as the high sense of importance every reasonable being must attach to the doctrines of "eternal life, offered by the Gospel." Caroline was conscious that she had been unhappy, not only from the burdening nature of her employments, but the petulance with which she had borne them : she received relief from the one through the medium of religious instruction, which disposed her to subdue the other. This happy association for ever preserved its influence in her mind ; and whenever she felt unhappy afterwards, she looked to Heaven for that consolation which first flowed to her from thence. Had they been given in the moment of hilarity, in the hour of exulting vanity, whether excited from personal or mental accomplishments, their impression would have been far more painful, and of course more slowly made upon her mind, and

never could have obtained the same hold on her affections : so valuable is a discerning preceptor to youth, since it is of the last importance, not only that good should be instilled, but instilled at the period when it is most likely to bring forth fruits meet for instruction.

Mrs. Mortimer now wore a face of much anxiety, was seldom at home, and when there, seldom visible till a late hour ; so abstracted, dull, and frequently peevish, that the affairs of the school-room, to which the sisters were confined, were permitted to take their own course. Miss Harewood, the governess, was an amiable and intelligent young woman, perfectly equal to the task she had undertaken, so far as related to the mechanical part of teaching ; but as this was the first time she had engaged in such a situation, and she was still very young, she had suffered Mrs. Mortimer to encroach too much upon her time, in the intolerable application she had demanded, in order to make up the loss of that time foolishly squandered in exhibiting her "little dears" to the world, when they ought to have been conning their lessons, dressing their dolls, or planting their tiny gardens. This young person, of course, felt truly grateful for the beneficial change produced in her department, as she partook not only of that liberty which benefited her

health, the sight of that active benevolence which enlarged her knowledge of human nature, and awakened the sweetest emotions of her heart, but of those lessons which flowing naturally through the actions and conversation of Olivia, became the "savour of life to her also." She was an orphan, and her little fortune had been wisely expended by her friends in procuring for her those means of instruction by which she might hereafter procure a genteel subsistence ; and she had with this view most industriously possessed herself of every advantage offered to her, at a great school in the vicinity of the metropolis ; but, alas ! save the mere form of words, the routine of family prayer, and the necessity of going to church perfectly neat and in good order, she had till now heard nothing respecting that higher knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation. Her heart was tender, her capacity excellent, and her habits so regular, that in her the good seed found the happiest soil, and produced the happiest effects. She became now cheerful, animated, and attached ; she felt a charm in existence she had never known before ; active good humour and vivid compassion sparkled in her countenance, and a conscious dignity, resulting from a sense of Divine protection, was discernible in her deportment, which heretofore evinced an air of dejection and bashfulness,

unworthy of her real merits. She once drooped, as if she deemed herself at best an accomplished slave ; she now rose to the sense of an elegant and virtuous woman, as blessed with "the liberty wherewith Christ had made her free."

Mr. Mortimer, in the happy society and the cheerful faces which now surrounded his table, seemed in a great measure to forget the cares which at times pressed heavy upon his mind, and which, it was evident, preyed upon his constitution. He was much troubled with bilious attacks, which during the time they lasted were so severe as to attract even the attention of Mrs. Mortimer, who ever appeared in the greatest alarm when the life of her husband was threatened, though the moment her fear was removed she resumed a line of conduct that could not fail to render that life miserable : a proof of selfishness that deeply disgusted Olivia, and naturally excited remarks, even from her own daughters. The silence of Olivia imposed a due restraint upon her sisters ; and Mrs. Mortimer continued to enjoy so much apparent deference and affection from her family, as to cause a considerable impression in her favour, upon those visitants who knew her conduct, in some respects, to be highly improper, but were willing to believe she had some latent good qualities which they had not discerned, little

thinking that the poor deformed woman, sometimes seen at the dinner-table, at Mr. Mortimer's elbow, but who rarely spoke in large parties, was the spring of all that appeared respectable in her character, or was really estimable in her establishment.

A few years before this period, Olivia had enjoyed the pleasure of a select and truly valuable society in her father's mansion, the friends of his late lady and himself, who loved Olivia, both for her own sake and that of her excellent mother. Time, and still more, the changes which had gradually displaced them, under Mrs. Mortimer's management, had now left her without one face in which she could recognise a friend, in the large circles which now occasionally surrounded a board which could no longer be deemed either social or plentiful ; and where she never would have made her appearance at all, but in compliance with the earnest solicitation of her father. He protested that he was ashamed of sitting down to help people to pitiful ragouts and Frenchified cookery, which only served to remind him of those times when he was accustomed to see noble sirloins and fat turkeys smoking on his table, surrounded by ladies in good satin gowns, and gentlemen who had a pleasure in waiting upon them ; “ instead of which,” he would add, “ I now see a

parcel of misses of all ages, gliding into their chairs like so many spectres, in muslin winding-sheets surmounted with heads fresh painted from the hair-dresser's shop ; and these are intermixed with staring fellows in Brutus wigs, emulating the dress of grooms, and the language of cooks and coachmen, while they seize the fricandeau and whirligigs, drink wine and call for bread, without any mercy at all on the poor starving ghosts at their elbows, who are thankful when an old gentleman of the old school, like myself, happens to be near enough to relieve their distress, by offering them an apology for a dinner, in the shape of a stewed oyster, or a bit of fricasseed sweetbread. Fine times, truly, when girls of sixteen, and matrons of six-and-twenty, must look to men turned sixty for common politeness : not only the age of chivalry, but that of compassion, is gone. In fact, the forwardness of the women set the men at ease in the first place, and now they are making use of their power with a witness : and the worst of it is, that the modest and worthy suffer by it ; for there is always a set, from fifteen to fifty, who are not only equal to helping themselves in all sorts of difficulty, but are, in plain English, so obtrusively impudent and assuming, that I heartily hope they will never be helped by anybody else. When I look at these women, I am thankful that

I have no son ; when I see the men, I tremble to recollect that I have two daughters."

" You had better," said Mrs. Mortimer, with a sneer, when she had listened to one of these philippics one day, " advertise for a Quaker's son, in a new broad brim, for one of your daughters ; and that of a country squire, armed with boots and spurs for the conquest of some blooming villager, for the other."

" I trust that my girls, if ever they marry, will not advertise for their husbands, though the thing is extremely common ; girls being now offered to market with as much publicity as any other commodity, and generally sold in the auction style to the highest bidder ; though it sometimes happens that many years elapse, in which the friends of the parties puff her in vain, and the mother exclaims, to little purpose—' Going, gentlemen !—going ! with all her beauty, her playing, her fortune, going, going, going '—before she is enabled to add that little emphatic word, *gone !* For my own part I wonder the ladies take the trouble they do in those cases ; for I think putting their daughters into an auctioneer's hands at once would answer much better, as of course the goods might be viewed, like pictures and estates, before the day of sale, and be allowed to show off their persons and their talents in the sale-room, under proper restriction and ex-

amination. This would allow a man the fair chance of comparison, and the power of bidding up to the proportionate value of each. I think, all things considered, it would be the fairest mode of election, since the study of private worth, fixed principles, suavity of temper, and similarity of disposition, are now dispensed with in a wife."

"You may be as satirical as you please on the times, my good sir; but I know—"

"So do I know; *that* is my only privilege," said Mr. Mortimer, endeavouring to laugh at his misfortunes.

"What I was going to say, Mr. Mortimer, is of consequence for *you* to know; that is, I am determined to marry Caroline well, at least, for she has had an education that entitles me to expect it: as to Emily, I am more easy; for as Olivia has brought her up, I expect she will give her a fortune, and that will enable her to marry at any time, especially as she is really pretty, notwithstanding the air of rusticity that vile trick of blushing still gives her."

"I am as anxious my daughters should marry well as you, my dear; but as our ideas as to what is *well* differ widely, and as the more I see of the fashionable world the less I like it, I should not be sorry to see your threat, under certain modifications, turned into a prophecy: for although

a country squire, and a rigid sectarian, are not precisely the men with whom such girls as ours might be happy, yet in this age of liberal improvement, it is very possible that their *sons* might be such as I could perfectly approve. But it is folly to speculate on such distant projects, though the girls begin to grow very womanly in their appearance now : however, we will drop the subject ; I hope they will marry *honest, prudent* men, who *love* them ; the rest we must leave to *Heaven*."

" *Heaven !* you and Olivia have such notions ! I wonder what Heaven has to do with the establishment of a woman of fashion."

" *Very little*, I can most conscientiously venture to affirm, Mrs. Mortimer," replied the husband, with a look which spoke more than any language, how fully he applied and felt the truth of the observation.





## X.

### The first Appearance.

"With mean compliance ne'er betray your trust,  
Nor be so civil as to be unjust"—POPE.



HE period was now past which Mrs. Mortimer had prescribed as necessary for the seclusion of her daughters, previous to their entry into the world for the purpose mentioned by their father in *fact*, though not in words. This purpose was not, however, permitted to sully their ears, as Mrs. Mortimer's policy supplied the place of delicacy; for she knew that a girl taken into public for the avowed purpose of catching a husband, must necessarily either droop under a bashfulness that would obscure her graces, or possess a confidence that would destroy them. The girls were therefore merely given to understand that at a convenient time they should go into company and visit public places, as other young women did at their period of life.

To the great satisfaction of Olivia, this period had been protracted a full year, for the purpose of introducing both sisters at one time. Olivia promoted this scheme, because she thought they would be mutual guardians of each other's virtues ; Mrs. Mortimer, because she flattered herself that the superior attractions of Caroline would receive a foil from Emily in the first outset ; and that Emily, so foiled, would afterwards emulate her more fashionable sister, which (being sixteen months younger) she would be enabled to do with great effect before the following winter. Her reason for delaying their appearance so long arose, indeed, from a motive still more opposed to that which actuated the truly maternal bosom of their elder sister ;—she had expended so much money, and obtained so much credit on her own account, as to be utterly unable to provide them necessary dresses for the occasion ; and having again had recourse to the purse of Olivia, who, she justly observed, “ was quite an altered woman in respect of *giving*,” she made a virtue of necessity, and consented to that which she could not avoid, by postponing their appearance, apparently at Olivia's request, until the following winter.

As the good sister, however, knew that the time must inevitably come when the prudence and virtue of her darling charge must be tried, when

the appointed time drew near she relieved the solicitude of the still poor and somewhat disconcerted Mrs. Mortimer, by presenting the girls in her presence with each a bill of fifty pounds. This she requested them to lay out in such additions to their wardrobe as their mother deemed necessary—adding, not for *their* government so much as that of the mother herself, “If, my dear girls, this should not be found sufficient for the purchase of such things as are really necessary for the *debut* of gentlewomen, do not stint yourselves to a few pounds, in the purchase of such things as are really worth the money; but remember that you immediately apply to *me* for what is deficient, since I shall make it a very positive point, in this case, to see the receipts from your tradesmen before you wear the article. I am an old maid, and have a right to be exact, you know; and according as I find *you* follow my advice and example in this particular, so you will find *me* considerate for your wants; remember, I lay no embargo on your taste, but I must be positive as to the direction of your principles.”

The eyes of Mrs. Mortimer, with the true spirit of a gambler, had already devoured the bills, and she was casting about on the possibility of transferring at least a portion of the precious paper into her card-purse, when this speech of Olivia’s

entirely frustrated her plans in the first instance ; but being a perfect adept in the art of turning all things to account, she contrived, on the strength of her daughters' ready money, to procure credit for an expensive dress for herself, hinting most sagaciously the independence of the young ladies, and her power of influencing their future expenditure. The last hint being given to the milliner, and the first being intended, through the medium of her various customers, to be freely circulated through the circle of fashion, to operate as an antidote to the whisper, which had reached even her ears, of " poor Mr. Mortimer breaks very fast ; he will be dropping off soon, and his estate goes with him ; his widow has taken good care of her personalities ; the girls will have but a trifle, except what his daughter may give them, and she may live these thirty years ; nay, it is possible she may marry, for old maids with money often do foolish things."

Mrs. Mortimer was surprised, and almost vexed, to find her girls were so far from taking advantage of Olivia's permission to draw further upon her bounty, that, notwithstanding various temptations in the shape of Mechlin lace and glittering ornaments, they actually went home with each several guineas in their pockets, though they had so judiciously expended the rest, that a lady of accom-

plished taste, who had been present by chance, stamped by her decided approbation the propriety of their selection; for it is very possible at this time for women to be really elegant in their dress for a much less sum than was necessary in the days of their grandmothers,\* though, if they pretend to run after every new whim, and vie with every splendid belle, the expenditure of a dozen grandmothers will by no means suffice them. Olivia, from her retirement, had seen and noted these things, and without leaving higher and more important points of conduct unattended, had yet found time to descant, in her usual way of blending example with precept, on every minutiae of female conduct; knowing it but too frequently happens that even enlightened minds and pure intentions are subject to petty derelictions in trivial matters, which tend essentially to prevent their utility in society, and injure their own happiness, if they are not early habituated to a vigilant watchfulness over their conduct, a perpetual reference to the higher principles of action: that fine moral sense of rectitude taught by our religion, should resemble the blood, that not only circulates through the veins and arteries, invigorating and sustaining the frame, but condescends to

\* This remark, though true in the year when the book was written, is not now quite so applicable.

visit the smallest vessel, and renovates every part of the system.

At length the important day arrived, and at the fashionable assembly of the honourable Mrs. Albin the sisters made their first appearance, and were received with more attention than their mother had predicted ; for, to her great mortification, she had discovered within the last week that Caroline's education had been thrown away upon her in a great measure, "since she had got no manners at all :" she was merely pretty, well shaped, and polished ; there was no peculiarity of style to attract attention, no affectation of sentiment, of knowledge, or even of rudeness ; she was neither a hoiden nor a heroine, nor, in fact, anything at all but a handsome, sensible young woman, with too much merit to need the assumption of any character but her own, and with too much honesty and ingenuousness to attempt it. This case poor Mrs. Mortimer thought deplorable, till she perceived that in spite of these defects her daughter was really preferred to the languishing Miss Simkins, the insipid Miss Smirk, and even to the staring Lady Bell Jolter, who each possessed a degree of notoriety : so true is it that unaffected simplicity, which asks for nothing beyond its due, generally obtains everything ; for in every circle there will be found some sensible and even worthy

people, whose suffrages have weight even with those who are neither, and who imperceptibly lead them right, for a certain period, at least;—such is the natural command of superior character.

Among the number of visitants announced was Lord Littledale. The moment his name was mentioned Emily's cheek was suffused with so deep a blush that it was impossible for her mother not to perceive it; and she hastily inquired, "where she had seen Lord Littledale?"

"I have never seen him, but I would just at this time give the world to be introduced to him," said she hastily.

"That is very likely—so would half the girls in the room; but it does not quite accord with your education to be impatient to be introduced to a handsome young nobleman;—though I don't know but it may be styled *naiveté*, and go off pretty well, as a new stroke of interesting rurality; I will see what can be done for you, child; you really carry yourself more *au fait* than Caroline, after all, I must acknowledge *that*."

"My dear mother, I thought he had been an *old* man, quite an *old* man, indeed I did!"

"Ridiculous! how could you blush for an old man? you must have seen the old lord's death in the paper, of course;—never affect disguise with

me, child ; 'tis absurd—we ought to understand each other in these cases."

" But, my dear mother, I did not see *that* in the paper, I assure you ; but I saw something of much more consequence in my eyes."

At this moment Mrs. Albin advanced to introduce a friend of hers to Caroline, and catching Emily's last words, inquired *who* was of consequence in her eyes ! to which she innocently answered, " Lord Littledale, madam ;" adding, " for I have a great favour to ask of him."

At this moment two remarkably handsome young men advanced to Mrs. Albin ; one of them she instantly saluted as Lord Littledale, the other was introduced by him as his college friend, Mr. Arlington.

That he was young, handsome, fashionable, and a nobleman, were not the things which now rushed rapidly through the mind of poor Emily, and dyed her cheeks with the deepest crimson ; it was the look of perfect complacency and good humour which he wore, and which, in the eagerness of her wishes, made her forget every lesser consideration. Though trembling with modest confusion, yet, conscious that the motive justified the deed, she stepped up to Mrs. Albin, saying, " I have seriously a reason for the wish I just now ex-

pressed, of being introduced to Lord Littledale ; I must speak with him for a moment."

Mrs. Albin, extremely surprised, had no time either to remonstrate or reflect,—“I believe,” said she, “your lordship hears the wish expressed by Miss Emily Mortimer.”

A significant look passed between the young men, which tended to disconcert poor Emily exceedingly, and she was so overpowered as to be only able to pronounce these words, “I beg pardon —but really, my lord, Mr. Berryl is—is—indeed he is a truly *good* man.”

His lordship, with an air of the most reassuring respect, begged to know “who Mr. Berryl was ?” and he spoke so slowly, and with such attentive consideration for the evident flutter of the poor girl, that Emily recovered her self-possession, and with all her native dignity and grace said, in a tone tremulous, but sweet and intelligent—“Mr. Berryl, my lord, is the curate of Whitechapel, where he has resided many years ;—the death of the incumbent is announced in the Morning Post to-day, and my extreme solicitude to entreat your attention to this excellent man, who was the friend of my earliest years, has induced me to intrude upon you in a manner perhaps too abrupt, or probably improper.” She hesitated, receded, and again blushed exceedingly. Lord

Littledale, taking her hand, led her to a seat, and placing himself beside her, observed, that he considered himself extremely obliged by the ingenuous manner in which she had directed his choice in so important a subject; and assuring her that he was particularly glad that she had spoken to him so *soon*, as it was probable that he might be importuned on the subject that very evening, he was, therefore, happy in giving her his word of honour that the living should be immediately transferred to her friend, which would save all further trouble to *him*, and he trusted would be very grateful to her.

*“Grateful! oh, my lord, I cannot tell you how happy you have made me!”* said the delighted Emily, her eyes glistening with tears, and her whole countenance glowing with animation, as artlessly she held out both her hands towards his lordship, with that motion of thankfulness with which she had been accustomed to receive the favours of her sister and father; but as quickly, by an intuitive sense of propriety, withdrawing them.

At this moment a genteel-looking man advancing, exclaimed, “Surely I have the happiness of seeing Emily Mortimer; I cannot be mistaken in your features, though it is five years since I had the pleasure of seeing you.”

"What is more extraordinary, St. Faire," said an old officer, who was standing near, "there is no change in the character of the young lady for the last five years, I will aver, though I did not know her five minutes ago."

With the exception of her sister Olivia, there was not one person in the world whom Emily could have seen with more pleasure, at this moment, than Alfred St. Faire. She received him with the frankness which she felt his due, not only as an old acquaintance, but as a person particularly dear to Miss Mortimer, whose habit of correspondence with his parents frequently led her to speak of their son as a young man of whom she entertained the highest opinion. She informed him with rapidity of the acquisition she had just made for her worthy preceptor, Mr. Berryl; which led him to remark, "that the first evening he saw her she had preserved the life of that excellent man, and on this, which he trusted was the renewal of their long-suspended acquaintance, she had made that life more comfortable." This observation led the surrounding group very naturally to inquire after the anecdote to which he alluded.

"Come, come, gentlemen," said Mrs. Albin, just as St. Faire had concluded his little story, "I cannot allow this monopoly in Miss Emily;

you cannot all dance with *her*, and I want partners for my young friends."

"Dance!" exclaimed they all at once, as if they only just now recollected it.

"Yes, *dance*; have you, Lord Littledale, engaged this fair advocate as your partner?"

"Not yet; but I shall be most happy to do it."

St. Faire appeared extremely disappointed, and engaged Emily for the next two dances. As she withdrew, Mr. Arlington protested he was ignorant of the art, and if he stood up, should doubtless put the whole set out; a fact Lord Littledale attested also. Mrs. Albin was disappointed, as he was unquestionably the finest man in her rooms, being taller and handsomer than his noble friend. St. Faire, however, complied with her wishes, and was led by her to a partner.

At the first pause in the dancing, which was viewed with exultation by Mrs. Mortimer, who already fancied herself the mother of a countess, as Emily was taking her seat by the side of Caroline, Mr. Arlington approaching, said, "I will be much obliged to thee to introduce me to thy sister."

Emily started, at what she considered an address so uncouthly free as to be unwarrantable on so slight an acquaintance; but on looking in the intelligent countenance of the speaker, she did not perceive any expression which could warrant her

resentment. Her inquisitive glance did not, however, escape him, and he instantly added, "I ought to ask pardon, Miss Mortimer, for an address made very inadvertently, since my appearance in a ball-room of course prevents you from suspecting a fact I have no difficulty in explaining. My mother is, or rather was, a Quaker; my father is of the Establishment, and I have been educated agreeably to his profession; but the habit of conversing with my mother, and a sister of hers, to whose society I am particularly attached, occasions me to be much in the habit of using their language whenever I feel very easy with the persons with whom I converse;—in other words, when I sincerely esteem them, as friend Littledale here can testify. Now as it happens that I have seen further into your heart in two hours than one generally sees in two years, I have been led into a freedom as uncommon to you as your character appears to me. Excuse my sincerity, and consider it as a humour which my mother gave me, or rather my aunt Smith, whose name ought to be a passport to your favour, since I know she is most truly attached to Olivia Mortimer, who is, I have understood, a person of singular worth."

The eyes of both the sisters shone with delight and approbation on the speaker as he pronounced these words; and Caroline soon found herself

more easy with Mr. Arlington, and more amused by his society than with anything she had hitherto met. She declined dancing any more;—a circumstance that drew upon her so many pointed remarks, that Mr. Arlington, with much delicate consideration, advised her to resume it. “Young women,” said he, “must not dare to think for themselves in cases of this kind; it is the exclusive privilege of men to be oddities: and to do the present race of my contemporaries justice, they act up to all their rights of being disagreeable. Formerly, when a man affected singularity, it was done on the strength of having genius or wit; but it is now sufficient to have selfishness and effrontery; the one teaches you to consult your own convenience at every one’s expense, and the other to stare every one in the face *whilst you are* doing it.”

Caroline, exceedingly amused by his conversation, which recalled more of that playful vivacity she was once remarkable for into her countenance and manners than had appeared for a long time, took his advice; but she did not meet with anything, in the further amusements of the evening, that could in any manner compensate to her for the loss of his conversation.

Alfred St. Faire from this evening became a constant visitant at the house of Mr. Mortimer.

His parents had, unknown to him, contrived this introduction to Mrs. Albin's, being desirous that he should form an acquaintance, and indeed a pre-dilection, for one of the sisters of a person they so highly esteemed as Miss Mortimer. She was well acquainted with their wishes, and had contributed her share to this meeting. Both parties well knew the contradiction too natural to the human heart, and had therefore forbore ever mentioning either party to the other, in more than general terms of praise; which, in Emily's case, they were enabled to do to Alfred, as he was partial to her since the time of their childhood. They likewise wished to submit in this, as in all other cases, the direction of their son's connection to an over-ruling Providence, and no further interfere than as their wisdom and love dictated just and honest means of influencing him; observing the due mean betwixt that carelessness which provides for no contingency, and that over-weaning solicitude which too frequently influences the character of parents who are providing for their only child.

The visits of St. Faire were by no means agreeable to Mrs. Mortimer, who, perceiving that his attentions were directed to Emily, rather than Caroline, (for whom, as a young man of excellent family and fortune, she would have been glad to

have engaged him,) felt that he thwarted her views, as she had persuaded herself that her youngest daughter might, with a little management, completely captivate Lord Littledale. She confessed that she was foiled in rendering Caroline the more *fascinating*, and owned that Olivia had some way bestowed "a charm beyond the reach of art," in the interesting rusticity of Emily; but asked, exultingly, if she did not see that the superior attention she had excited was owing to having understood her own style of bewitching *naïveté*?

"So far from that," replied Olivia, "I conceive it to be merely the effect of an accident, which, by chance, placed Emily in a more striking point of view, and which, though a matter of *mere* chance, ought to teach us the necessity of cultivating the virtues of the heart as well as the beauties of the mind; and will, I hope, help you, my dear madam, to consider the girls as they really are,—sensible, amiable, and pious; more calculated for the wives of worthy, religious men, than dashing, idle, dissipated men of fashion, whose frivolous minds and corrupted hearts may delight in that parade of sentimental nonsense and voluptuous excitation the misses of the present day exhibit, when they pretend to be *interesting*, *fascinating*, and *charming*, but who cannot have one prin-

ciple or feeling in common with ours, who are, at the present moment, equally worthy, equally well informed, and equally well inclined, though they may differ in some very trifling points of character."

" Dear me, Olivia, how you talk!—marry mere worthy men, indeed! Not that I have any objection to worthy young men," added Mrs. Mortimer, bridling her passion and condescending to smile; " in some cases it is all very well. Now as you think the girls equally *good*, suppose we were to lay our heads together, as friends certainly ought to do, in matters of such moment, and contrive that young St. Faire should fall in love with Caroline, who is certainly after all a more elegant girl than Emily: what do you think of it?"

" I think it a very desirable connection; but I will own I should cease to think so if St. Faire were a man subject to *falling* in love with any girl for her person. I must, however, decline all interference in this case, because I perceive that he is already attached to Emily; and although there was a period in my life when I own I *did*, for a very excellent purpose, join in a little match-making, yet you must do me the justice to say that I did *not* exert my talents in match-breaking."

Mrs. Mortimer, thus foiled, did not, however,

despair ; she consoled herself by pushing her daughters as far as possible into every party where they were likely to meet Lord Littledale, notwithstanding the modest opposition they frequently made to her wishes. She was successful in her pursuit ; his lordship was pleased with Emily, but, not liking the character of her mother, did not choose, for a considerable time, to commit himself so far as to make proposals to the daughter. In the course of the winter he became acquainted with Mr. Mortimer ; and as he liked *his* character as much as he disapproved of that of his lady, he at length spoke his wishes with regard to his youngest daughter. The old gentleman referred his lordship to Emily, without encouraging him in the hope that his wishes would meet due reward ; though he expressed himself highly grateful for the honour of the offer, which was doubly gratifying, from the worth, as well as rank and fortune, of him who made it.

Lord Littledale was modestly refused by Emily ; yet she did not plead engagement as her reason. He was somewhat piqued ; yet the air of humility which she wore softened his anger, and he determined to renew addresses which appeared rather declined from timidity than dislike.

Conscious that she could not offer a reason, though she felt that she *had* one, which ought in

conscience to prevent her from accepting him, she endeavoured to speak more explicitly. In doing so, she convinced his lordship of the purity of her intentions, while she annihilated his hopes. He saw that she was in some way delicately situated, and he was convinced that she had an esteem for him, which might be further improved if she was relieved from her present embarrassment ; he therefore determined so far to obey her wishes as to accept her dismissal, without entirely abandoning his pursuit.

Mrs. Mortimer was not at home when these things took place, and on being informed of them her rage was for some minutes indescribable ; but it was succeeded by a consternation which subdued even her passion ; and, to the utter astonishment of all who beheld her, she wept in very agony ; declaring that “ the dismissal of his lordship would not only be the ruin of the mad fool who had done it, and whom she never more would regard as her daughter, but would bring destruction on her house.” Her family regarded these sayings as the burst of grief arising from disappointment, and only sought to soothe the sorrow it was too late to prevent.



## XL

### The Broken Heart.

"In the midst of life we are in death."



HEN Mrs. Mortimer recovered some degree of composure, she took refuge from the inquiring eyes of her family, (who, notwithstanding their conclusion that her words were dictated by passion, could not help desiring some kind of explanation,) by shutting herself in her own room, and resolutely denying all admittance to every one.

For two or three days every person observed that retirement which hers seemed to impose upon *them*; though each endeavoured in turn to comfort Mr. Mortimer, whose agitation on this account, and from other latent causes, brought on a bilious attack. When he found himself somewhat better, he insisted upon their going out as usual; and as



THE AGREEABLE SURPRISE.

Page 151.



the Royal Academy was about to close, Olivia and Caroline agreed to pay it a farewell visit; but Emily, who considered herself as particularly called to soothe her father's troubles at this time, would not leave him.

During the time they were in the exhibition they were agreeably surprised to be accosted by Mr. Arlington, who was accompanying his mother and aunt; and they, together with himself, expressed great satisfaction in this accidental meeting; on which Caroline observed, that she had been rather surprised at never seeing Mr. Arlington in a place of public resort since the time she first met him.

“I seldom put my head into vanity fair,” replied he; “but I have no objection to do it sometimes, especially when I have a chance of seeing new faces, and reading, or fancying I read, the way in which the novel scene affects them. I had a great treat at Mrs. St. Albin’s, from witnessing the genuine benevolence and modest confusion of your sister Emily.”

Caroline’s eyes sparkled with pleasure, and she said, with great vivacity, “You saw only a portion of that excellent temper and disposition which have been for several years continually presented to my contemplation in Emily’s daily conduct, I assure you, sir.”

"This will do," said Mrs. Arlington, in a whisper to her son, which was audible to Olivia ; "there are not many

"Who can hear  
A sister's praises with unwounded ear."

"But Caroline can do *more*," returned the young man, with an air of proud exultation, that spoke how much he was interested in all that she could do or say.

They conversed on pictures and painters, and subjects connected with them, in a manner which showed how much the minds of all had been improved by reading and study, and how generally assimilated they were with each other ; Caroline evincing, more by her looks and manner than by words, how much more a treat of this nature was in unison with her taste than the more noisy entertainments commonly preferred by young women. Mr. Arlington justly observed, she had the rare quality of "seeing an exhibition without being an exhibition"—a thing not often found, especially amongst those who have a smattering of the art, who are anxious to display talents they would be thought to possess ; and while real artists are silently walking round the rooms, observing the various works with the most scrupulous attention, or fixed admiration, seeking to form a just judgment on their comparative merits, these are

flippantly deciding, pertly condemning, or loquaciously extolling, what in fact they neither feel nor understand. Arlington saw all this on every side of him ; in his young companion he saw *none* of it. "She will," said he, internally, "please both my parents—she has the frankness of my father, and the modesty of my mother, and I don't *dislike* her myself."

The last conclusion appeared indisputable to all parties, for both his mother and aunt told him, after they had parted with the ladies, that his attentions to Caroline had been too marked, and evidently distressed her ; and that unless he meant to follow them by a declaration of affection, he had been much to blame : but this reproof had been given with such mildness, that except where it glanced on the pain he had given Caroline, it was received without any on his part. The idea of wounding her delicacy hurt him exceedingly ; and he declared that he would leave nothing undone to convince both them and her of the sincerity of his regard, and the high esteem in which he held the uncommon merit of the young lady.

In fact, though Caroline had only met Mr. Arlington in public, yet she had been the object of his continual attention, through the medium of Lord Littledale, who, seeing her with the eyes of a friend, not a lover, had, in the opinion of Arlington,

been a much more impartial judge of her character than he could have been himself. From him he had obtained information which, by perfectly according with the accounts he had received from his aunt, who had frequently met her with Olivia on schemes of charity, enabled him to conclude that he might with propriety admit that predilection he had conceived for her, but which he had thought it his duty to check in himself, from an idea that it was but too probable that she partook, at least in a measure, the errors of her mother ; scarcely deeming it possible that the care of her eldest sister could so far have warded off the evil as was really the case.

Whilst this young man retired, indulging alternately those expectations which supported hope, and those fears which are inherent to the truly and worthily attached, the sisters were returning to a scene most dreadfully different.

On alighting, to their surprise, the door of the house was open, and the servants were seen flying about in all directions ; and to the repeated inquiries of Olivia no answer was given : the footman who attended them ran into the kitchen, and returning with a face indicative of equal alarm and compassion, cried out—" Oh, madam ! my master ! my poor master ! "

Caroline sprung towards her father's apartment ;

but Olivia, trembling with apprehension, was scarcely able to move or breathe. Before she had recovered herself sufficiently to proceed, two men she had never seen before entered the breakfast-room, addressing each other as they advanced, and making observations on the furniture.

On perceiving Olivia, the men made uncouth bows, and stood awkwardly at the threshold, as if about to recede, but yet with that air of vulgar consequence which claims its right to proceed.

“Have you any business in this apartment ?” said Olivia, with an air of distressful doubt.

“Why, yes, ma’am,” said the elder of the two, “we ha bisness enough ; we has got an execution in the house for a good round sum ; but if so be as you choose for to take the matter up, seeing as they do zay you be rich, that is nothing to we—the sooner we be dismissed the better.”

“My fathèr, my poor father !” said Olivia, sinking into the nearest chair.

“Why to be sure, ma’am,” said the man, with an air of increased respect, for sorrow ever exacts this from the lowest of mankind, where the heart is not hardened by vice ; “to be sure it is very hard upon his honour, because ’tis a plain case as how he has been deceived as it were, you *see*, (for I teks it you be deceived too). Madam Mortimer, she goes and gets all the money she can out

of his honour, to pay tradesmen's bills, and then, what does she do, but spends it all on cards and dice, and such like sinfulness ; and then she goes about to all the tradesfolks, and first she scolds 'em, and says as how they ought to be patient, because his honour was used to be most particular in paying them himself so long as he had health —well ! when their gratitude was quite worn out, as you know needs must in time, then she goes and says as how you was coming home again, and you would bring a power of money and pay them all : when you comes, things are never the better, but she goes, gives them a trifle, and so put off from time to time, till last Christmas ; then she gives out that her daughter be going to marry a great lord, and she would pay everybody : but people were quite tired out, and she has had a deal to do to keep 'em quiet these last three months ; howsomdever, they did find out that there was something in it, so they held off a bit longer, when lo and behold ! it came out that Miss had 'scarded the great lord, or he'd 'scarded her, one of the two, and so they hadn't any patience left ; and Mr. Hind the grocer have got an execution in the house, and there be eleven writs taken out for his honour."

Olivia groaned for very anguish.

"Don't fret, Miss," said the other man ; "take

my word, he'll not suffer long ; if ever I seed death in any man's face, I seed it in his this very morning, as they were 'sisting him up stairs."

At this moment Olivia's maid entered, and she seized the opportunity of retiring. In her way to her father's room she had the misfortune to hear not only all the man had advanced fully confirmed, but likewise that Mrs. Mortimer had made great depredations on her husband's property within a very short time, by drawing on his banker, who had answered her drafts, under the idea of Mr. Mortimer being prevented writing by return of his periodical bilious attack. The person added, that this complaint had now returned upon him with such unprecedented violence that the physician, who was called in about half an hour before, had declared he must either be soon relieved or he would not survive it.

Under the dreadful impression occasioned by these words Olivia entered her father's apartment. He was now lying on his bed, and attended by his two younger daughters, whose care and tenderness appeared to relieve him. Mrs. Mortimer was in the room, but on Olivia's entering it averted her face. She advanced to the bed-side, and her unhappy parent instantly saw that she was already in possession of those fatal facts which were now destroying him ; but his impatience to

speak with her was intolerable ; he therefore instantly desired Emily and Caroline to leave the room, and putting out his trembling hand to Olivia, drew her close to him, and commanding all the courage he was able, thus addressed her :—

“ My dear girl, you frequently have offered to assist me ; but that I never claimed your kindness any further than as it was extended to the advancement of my children’s comfort, within the limits of your fortune, has ever been my consolation : the time is, however, *come*, when my sense of delicacy towards you is subdued by strong necessity ; and I must now, Olivia, become your debtor, in such a way as may suit our general convenience, so as not eventually, I trust, to injure you materially. I rejoice that a part of your fortune is secured equally beyond my power and your own, for at such a time as this I know you would offer too much, and perhaps I should accept *all*, for want is a terrible trial to the principles.”

Mrs. Mortimer wept aloud.

“ We will not anticipate evil,” said Mr. Mortimer, in a softened tone ; “ I trust that after our creditors are all paid, sufficient will remain to enable you to provide for my family in your country house ; but immediate relief is my present object : you used to offer me the loan of two thousand pounds, which you had at Hammers-

ley's, and I must borrow that of you this very day."

"I have sunk that, some time ago," said Olivia.

"*Sunk* it, Olivia!" exclaimed the father, in a voice of terror; "I am astonished to hear that—but you have fifteen hundred pounds in bank stock, which may be turned into money immediately."

"Alas! that cannot be commanded; I have purchased an annuity with it."

Mrs. Mortimer fell senseless on the floor. Olivia flew to her assistance, and conveying her to another room, summoned her daughters, who soon recovered her; but whilst they were endeavouring to restore *her*, Miss Mortimer hastened back to her father, anxious to relieve the painful surprise she had awakened, and to concert with him on the best way of turning such other parts of her property as she could command to his more immediate relief. The anxiety visible in his eager looks, in which reproach was somewhat blended with confidence, induced her not to delay another moment to explain her conduct; and after briefly informing him that she had left Mrs. Mortimer recovering, she thus began:—

"The day Caroline was seven years of age I placed one of the two thousands you mentioned out at interest, to accumulate till she was of age; and

on Emily's attaining the same age, I did the same for her ; the rest of the ready money I could command went, with a trifling exception, to the purchase of my estate in Berkshire, which was a cheap purchase, and where we can live comfortably all together until your income shall have paid off your debts, as with the surplus I mentioned I not only furnished it decently, but provided a plain carriage, you know : so that, my dear father, your affairs may, with a little management, doubtless be comfortably arranged."

"Then so far from having injured your fortune, you have improved it. Ten thousand thanks for your care of my poor girls—they are now off my mind. But still I wish for a little ready cash. How happened you to sink the fifteen hundred pounds ? but I suppose it was to make up the deficiency in your income."

"No, it was to purchase a life annuity for Mrs. Mortimer on very good terms—I have only just settled it : the first payment will be made next Michaelmas ; she is by it entitled to one hundred and twenty pounds per annum for life ; and as I mean to double my gift to each daughter on their coming of age, they may help her, you know ; but in case of their marriage, I will further promise her such assistance as may be requisite."

"My daughter ! my *more* than daughter !" ex-

claimed the father, “thou hast done all things well ! my children are provided for ; and though I still trust my affairs may be brought about, if this stroke should be fatal, so far as all mortal things are concerned thou hast robbed death of its sting ; and may God abundantly reward this thy labour of love towards me and mine, dear child of my beloved Olivia !”

“But, my dear father, this does not satisfy me ; point out to me the manner in which I can more immediately assist you ; had it not better be by the mortgage than the sale of my estate ? Allow me to send for your attorney.”

“I will allow you, my dear Olivia, to do everything your own way ; but I must not deceive either you or myself—I feel at this moment I am a dying man : the stroke of this morning was too much for me ; and even the comfort you have given me, by causing agitation of a different kind, has its share in destroying my weakened frame.”

Olivia, in extreme alarm, again despatched the servant for the physician, for she saw the grievous prognostic but too fully verified, in the altered countenance of the invalid, who with great difficulty suppressed the anguish of his bodily pain.

“Olivia,” said he, when the severity of his paroxysm had somewhat abated, “’tis in vain you send for help—the Physician of souls is the

only one to whom I can look ; pray *for* me, my child, and pray *with* me."

The mind of Mr. Mortimer had experienced so much relief, that when his attendants were permitted to re-enter his room, they flattered themselves he was regaining ease and strength ; but it was in fact far otherwise, as severe inflammation was every moment increasing upon him. Whilst this was doubtful, he had, as we have seen from his first address to Olivia, been anxious for a supply of ready money, in order to insure his personal liberty, conscious that if he retired to the country, his income, which he determined immediately to make over to his creditors, must in the course of a short time satisfy their demands ; but as his increasing pains threatened him with immediate death, his fears naturally took a different turn, and he became only anxious to save his wife and children, but especially the latter, from positive want, or absolute dependence. His wife had confessed, in the first moments of her anguish, when the execution entered the house, that she had had many sums from Olivia ; and having found himself so grossly deceived by her, his fears outwent the reality, for he knew the extent of his Olivia's generosity, but was not aware either of her firmness or her foresight. His consciousness of comfort from the burden withdrawn was in proportion

to the severity of the overwhelming stroke which preceded it, and which, though often suspected in part, and often deprecated in sorrow, had been such as at once completely to crush hope, confidence, and (feeble as his constitution was become) even life itself.

Before Mrs. Mortimer and her children returned into the room, Mr. Mortimer, writhing under severe pains, again drew Olivia towards him, and requested her, in the most earnest manner, not to relate any circumstance of what had passed in this conversation to any human being, until that period when Mrs. Mortimer should be entitled to receive the income she had so kindly provided, when it would be no longer possible to conceal it.

Olivia wept; she could not promise to keep back anything which would contribute to the consolation of those who were afflicted.

“This is not a time in which it would become me to inflict an unnecessary pain,” said Mr. Mortimer; “but I have the strongest reasons for making this requisition. So perfect is the love and reliance of the children upon you, Olivia, that they will not find any difference in the idea of being dependent on you for immediate comforts, or receiving them at a more distant period from your hands; but as I am convinced that the creditors will be much better satisfied and more

honourably dealt with by you than by Mrs. Mortimer, I wish you to exert yourself after my death, and settle all my affairs—which I am certain you will not be permitted to do, unless my wife conceives herself more dependent on you than she really is; promise me, therefore, Olivia, that you will conceal it one month at least, or rather till you have settled all my affairs, which I shall forthwith enable you to do: my advice and request is immediately connected with the welfare of many, and can injure none.”

Olivia promised hastily, for the attorney was now entering the room. He added a short codicil to the will, which Mr. Mortimer had had by him for some years, by which himself and Olivia were left sole arbiters of his affairs; and then withdrew, for the invalid was anxious now to prepare himself, as far as he was able, for the awful change he was about to experience.

When the poor girls learned the state of their father, for a time their distress knew no bounds: to have parted with him at any time would have been a severe trial; but to see him precipitated into the grave, by the shameless extravagance and covert duplicity of their mother, was a stroke of such tenfold affliction as appeared too much for them to endure.

At Olivia's earnest exhortation, they so far

commanded themselves as to obtain the requisite composure for again visiting their dying parent. The complacency with which he received, and the fervent manner in which he recommended them to Heaven, deceived them, and they flattered themselves that he was better. On hearing this, Mrs. Mortimer came to his bed-side; for she had dreaded approaching him as a dying man, from that childish terror which is the perpetual weakness of those who have suffered luxury to subdue their native energy, and are unblessed with that hope which looks beyond the grave: her humbled countenance—her pallid and fearful looks, which seemed to sue for pity and protection from all around her—awoke the tender compassion of her injured but forgiving husband, and he tenderly recommended her to the dutiful kindness of her children, and particularly to the bounty of Olivia. He had held out his hand to her in token of perfect amity; but whilst he yet spoke he was observed to be convulsed, and before the surrounding group had time to remark on this alarming appearance, a universal tremor seized him, and a few short convulsive sobs terminated his mortal existence.



## XII.

### *The Day of Adversity.*

"The real satisfaction which praise can afford, is by repeating aloud the whispers of conscience, and by showing us that we have not endeavoured to deserve well in vain."—JOHNSON.



THE sight of her husband's death completely overwhelmed the little spirits Mrs. Mortimer had preserved, and she was again conveyed to her room in a state of insensibility. Olivia alone, she who had longest known, and best loved her father, she alone preserved that composure to be expected from the character of a true Christian, and so peculiarly called for on the present occasion.

When the funeral was over, she obeyed the wishes of her father, by undertaking herself the complete settlement of his affairs; but in order to save Mrs. Mortimer and her daughters from the pain and mortification to which she must necessarily subject herself, she sent them all down to

gether to her country house, and then commenced the painful task of selling the house, furniture, and carriages of her father, and collecting such little property as still remained from the fortune he enjoyed, and which was of a nature to be easily disposed of. She had the satisfaction at length to settle with every creditor, and to find a surplus of between £3000 and £4000 remaining, with which she hastened to revive the hearts of the mourners at Whitechapel.

The absence of Miss Mortimer had been protracted in London, and she was impatient to break the painful silence she had promised to observe, though many little circumstances had occurred which proved that her father had been perfectly right in imposing it; and she now saw a new proof of his wisdom in the conduct of his daughters, which proved that "sweet are the uses of adversity."

When Olivia arrived at her much-loved country residence, she found her sisters walking in the garden in close conversation with Maria Berryl: they sprung forward to meet her, with sincere pleasure, though many tears were shed on both sides.

When Maria had departed, and the first impulse of their feelings had subsided, Caroline, addressing Olivia, said: "My dear sister, we are all well

aware of the distressing business you have gone through in London for us: we wish to tell you that the letter which informed us that all our debts were completely paid was inexpressibly dear; and has so far relieved our spirits that we have now formed a plan for our future subsistence, which we trust you will approve."

"But I told you, my dears, that there would be a remaining surplus, and I am happy to say it is more than I once had reason to expect."

"Then we will apply it to my mother's use," said Emily, "in some way which will secure it; but Caroline was going to tell you our scheme, sister; it is that of joining Maria Berryl in opening a boarding-school, as soon as we are any of us at an age to be trusted with so important a charge."

"In doing this, you will be subjected to many difficulties, the most painful of which will be that of seeing those people, and being probably obliged to them for encouragement, who have known you in a different situation. Mrs. St. Faire and Mrs. Arlington will, I dare say, do their best to assist you; but would you choose to consult them?"

The girls blushed exceedingly, but Caroline, soon recovering, said, "In *time* we shall conquer every feeling that is inimical either to our happiness or usefulness, sister; our heavenly Father

will assist us: we have considered the nature of *all* our difficulties; and though we feel them to *be* such, yet we trust we are equal to encountering them. Emily has another piece of information for your ear, but she entreats you to keep it from my mother, who is now at Mr. Berry's, whose kindness to her is of a piece with the rest of his character.

“Well, Emily, but what is your piece of information?”

“Lord Littledale has written me a very kind letter, renewing his addresses.”

“Well, that is kindly, though prematurely done, in one sense—have you replied to it?”

“Certainly, and declined it with many thanks.”

“You are very determined on that point;—a change so great as you have experienced would have altered the sentiments of most young women.”

“It has *confirmed* mine. If I refused Lord Littledale when I thought myself independent, and hoped I had a fortune to give him, still more ought I to decline his hand, now I have nothing, since it was always impossible for me to love him as he merits.”

“You might learn to love him in time; women are naturally grateful to the man who distinguishes them, and this principle is the best foundation

for attachment in our sex, and, perhaps, the only one a truly modest woman can avow: we will not, however, distress your feelings by any further examination at present. I am by no means sorry that the affair is so settled; not because you had *not* a romantic attachment for his lordship, but because I can hardly conceive it possible that two people so situated would have been happy: great disparity in fortune rarely fails to produce constraint, jealousy, and mistrust in both parties, especially between people of delicate sensibility. We will now talk on pleasanter subjects, previously observing, that the pious fortitude you have shown in your change of circumstances, and the admirable plan of utility and independence you are willing to adopt, have my sincerest approbation, since they are, under the divine blessing, the fruits of those very principles I have endeavoured to instill into you, and not from any mistrust of my love towards you and care of you; no, my *sisters*—my *children*! you cannot have doubted my love."

"Doubted, oh, no!" exclaimed they, both hanging weeping round her neck; "we always looked to you for every help that we might want; but with such education as we have had, we thought it a duty to help ourselves, and prove we were worthy of such a sister."

Olivia saw how justly her father had judged, in making this time of temporary poverty the finishing stroke of his children's education, the touchstone of their characters; and with thankful heart she inwardly praised God for even the sorrow these beloved darlings had experienced. When she recovered sufficient serenity, she informed them of those circumstances which the reader is already acquainted with, and their tears of gratitude now succeeded those of affection: when informed that their dear father's last moments were soothed and consoled by this knowledge, their tenderness was still more awakened; they rushed into each other's arms, and for a moment, in speechless emotion, looked up to heaven, then sinking on their knees at the feet of Olivia, besought the Divine Father, whose mercies they so largely experienced, to shower his choicest blessings on the head of *her*, who was to *them* the ministering angel of *his* goodness. Whilst thus engaged their minds were too much absorbed to attend to lesser things; and they were surprised by the abrupt entrance of Mrs. Mortimer, leaning on the arm of Alfred St. Faire.

Emily rose in confusion, and hastily withdrew, followed by the eyes of the young man, in which deep respect and tender regard were depicted; he apologized for his abrupt entrance, by saying

that his parents being now at Mr. Lewis's, he had come over to inquire after the family, and being seen by Mr. Berryl from his window, he had intercepted him by the information that Mrs. Mortimer was then in the house.

“You can never come at a wrong time,” said Olivia, giving him her hand, “though you *did* arrive at the moment when our meeting had naturally produced so much agitation, that I am sure you will excuse my saying, come again to-morrow, and bring your dear parents with you; we are too old friends to have any concealments with each other, and to-morrow will be a day of explanation.”

Alfred coloured deeply, and respectfully withdrew, much affected. Mrs. Mortimer looked exceedingly distressed; she could not meet the eyes of Olivia, and she dreaded the very word explanation; it had produced her so much mortification of late, that there was not one in the vocabulary to which she had so decided an aversion.

Caroline read her thoughts, and hastened to relieve them; she ran rapidly through all that Olivia had detailed, and concluded with saying, that Emily and herself had no wish so near their hearts as that of contributing to her comfort in the disposal of everything.

Mrs. Mortimer's heart was too selfish not to feel more unmixed joy from the acquisition of property than either of her daughters; but her understanding was too good, much as she had abused it, not to see the extent of her obligations to Olivia, and feel, for a time at least, the sense of lively gratitude, which it was hoped by all around would operate to her lasting advantage, as her heart, now melted by sorrow, and humbled by mortification, was predisposed to feel the value of such a character.

It is a fact, in which the experience of many widows coincide, that Mr. Mortimer was much more dear to his lady since she had lost him than ever he had been before; and although the principal part of the sorrow she had felt since his death had arisen from her own altered situation in society, the prospect of an old age of poverty, or dependence on a person who might accord her the boon of charity, but never could grant her that of esteem, yet she had undoubtedly felt much real grief, from the recollection of a person who had taken her from want, endowed her with affluence, treated her with generous confidence and kindness for more than twenty years, and had at length sunk under the stroke of shame and sorrow to which her vices had subjected him. The remorse it was impossible for her

not to feel was heightened by the recollection that she had ever seen the best example before her eyes in the conduct of her cousin, Mrs. St. Faire, who, though much younger, had ever conducted herself with the most perfect propriety, and was at this hour as happy in the practice of piety and virtue as *she* was rendered miserable by an opposite conduct, which, on reflection, she found had never afforded her the triumph of even a single hour without some distressing drawback, and of late had burdened her with such severe and harassing sensations, such continual anxiety and distressing solicitude, as to be scarcely exceeded by her present troubles. When she contemplated the security of her present income, and her entire freedom from debt, the sense of ease she enjoyed almost repaid her for the splendour whose fictitious joys were vanished for ever; and carried with them her hopes, her fears, and her occupations, for the long period of her past life.

"Mark how the world its votaries rewards—  
A youth of follies, an old age of cards."





### XIII.

#### *Virtue Rewarded.*

"Such are the blest rewards of virtuous love,  
And thus their moments pass."      THOMSON



WHEN Mr. St. Faire and his lady arrived at Miss Mortimer's the next day, their meeting was joyful, but affecting; and the young people withdrew, that it might be more unrestrained. After the first effusions of feelings were somewhat subsided, Mr. St. Faire said—"In giving me my beloved Emily you bestowed on me a blessing which I have proved inestimable, my friend; but I must now beseech you to allow me to hope you will give another Emily to my son; you have a parent's right in her, and must not deny us your influence. Alfred knew that Lord Littledale loved her, for his own affection rendered him quick-sighted; and though he cultivated her

acquaintance, perhaps further than he ought to have done, under that idea, yet he had at length the resolution to tear himself from London, and leave his lordship an undisputed field. We have learned this morning from Mr. Berryl, on whom we called, that Emily has refused him: we apprehend this is the explanation you meant to give us; but my impatience could not wait to receive it: remember, I am pleading for my only son."

"Then you are willing to take my Emily, unportioned, to be your daughter?"

"Is she not *your* daughter, Olivia?—the child nurtured by your love—blessed by your example—the beloved too of our excellent Alfred! Oh, she is more than portioned!—she will bring to our hearts a dower beyond all price."

"I must, however, rob you of the generous exultation you feel, to substitute my own—by saying that she will have a very handsome fortune on the whole; but I will never forget that you were willing to accept her without one, as the child of your Olivia; and I have no doubt but Alfred will meet in her all that is desirable in a companion for this world, and that which is to come."

Alfred had in the meantime pleaded his own cause with equal success; but he felt somewhat mortified, rather than rejoiced, when he found his

Emily was yet comparatively rich ; for he was so proud both of her virtues and her preference, that he wanted no more ; and as he received this news from Mrs. Mortimer, to whom Emily very properly referred him, he could not help expressing a momentary pang ; which showed her how entirely her child was beloved for her own sake, and convinced her that an affection like *this* was not to be obtained by the art of dress or the affectation of manners.

Tenderly attached to a virtuous, amiable young man, for whom she had felt regard from her very infancy, and surrounded by the approving smiles of all she loved, Emily did not suffer her present happiness to seduce her into forgetfulness of him whose memory still claimed her tender respect ; and she resolutely refused the solicitations of St. Faire, to marry before the expiration of her mourning. For several succeeding months he resided at Mr. Lewis's, and the family enjoyed a perpetual intercourse, which rendered them all more dear to each other, and enabled them to lay plans for future life, consistent with their several situations.

It was resolved that Mrs. Mortimer, whose love for the world revived as her means of even partial enjoyment returned, should take a house for herself and Caroline in a neighbouring town,

where genteel society might be enjoyed at a small expense, and where she still hoped to be queen of a little circle; as, with the addition of Caroline's fortune, and the interest of that left by her husband, together with Olivia's provident annuity, she would be deemed rich amongst her contemporaries. Poor Caroline submitted with meekness to an arrangement she could not like; since she naturally wished to be near Olivia or Emily; but as it was agreed that she should reside with the latter for some time after her marriage, she was the better enabled to submit to this privation.

When the house was taken and furnished in N——, Mrs. Mortimer was about to remove; she became impatient to go thither, and Olivia did not oppose her determination. She accordingly departed with her eldest daughter, who, although the distance was short, felt the separation from her sisters a severe affliction, and could not help envying Emily, who remained behind, the enjoyment of such agreeable society as an affianced husband and an inestimable friend.

Caroline's head was laid back in the chaise, in mournful contemplation of the past and the future, endeavouring to reconcile her mind to the arduous duties which she foresaw must attend a residence with her mother, since their inclinations

and pursuits could seldom coincide, and must in her case be perpetually conceded, when she was roused from her painful reverie by the voice of the postboy, who desired the ladies to alight, as he had just discovered, in following the chaise up the hill, that the lynch-pin was broken, and it would be safer for them to walk, till their arrival at the next bar should enable him to procure another.

Mrs. Mortimer blamed him for being so careless, just as Caroline was praising him for his attention; but they had scarcely begun to feel the inconvenience of ascending the remainder of a long hill, when a travelling coach overtook them, and an elderly gentleman looking out, perceived their situation, and with equal politeness and humanity requested them to use his carriage, saying, "We are three at present; but I am certain my son will have pleasure in taking a seat in the barouche box, for your accommodation."

"My daughter is so slender," said Mrs. Mortimer, "that she can easily sit between two gentlemen;" and with proper thanks for the kindness, she entered the coach. Caroline followed, and was quietly seating herself by the only person of the party whose face she had yet seen, when two voices exclaimed at once—"Miss Mortimer! are we *indeed* so happy?—Do we

*indeed receive you, Miss Caroline?" and with extreme trepidation, not unmixed with pleasure, she perceived Mrs. Arlington and her son, who immediately introduced her to his father, to whom the incident appeared to be extremely gratifying.*

The family were at this time on their way to Bath, a place which Mrs. Arlington visited every year, finding benefit to her health from its medicinal waters: it had been the intention of the younger gentleman to pay a visit to Olivia, during his mother's stay there, for the purpose of further informing himself of the situation, affections, and character of Caroline; which inquiry he had the full consent of his father to prosecute, in such a manner as he should find expedient. Although he, like Mr. St. Faire, was ignorant of the fortune of the young ladies, and had heard only of the general breaking up of Mr. Mortimer's affairs, yet such was his reliance upon the wisdom of his son and his wife, and his firm belief that the "price of a virtuous woman was above rubies," that he submitted to their wishes in this respect, though he frequently expressed a desire to see Caroline, before the affair was concluded.

This desire was now most happily fulfilled; for on their arrival at N——, Mrs. Mortimer, who felt proud of making her first entrance into the place a little in her old style of travelling, pressed

the party to her house with such cordiality that they willingly accepted an invitation so agreeable to their wishes. Their visit was even prolonged for several days; and before its conclusion, such an explanation was made of the sentiments of the young gentleman, that a correspondence was entered into, which soon ripened into the most perfect confidence, and placed the happy Caroline in the same situation with her beloved Emily, to whom she speedily related every particular attending this interesting event, and who rejoiced in it, as the only circumstance which was hitherto wanting to complete her own felicity.

At the appointed time Mr. Berryl joined the hands of Emily and Alfred St. Faire—Caroline and young Arlington; and this double union made Olivia as happy as any of the party. She was now enabled to rejoice, not only in the good, but the evil of her past life; since her personal sufferings had been the means, under the Divine dispensation, of enabling her to devote her time, her talents, and her fortune, to two dear, amiable, and virtuous sisters, who were sensible of her goodness, and returned her love with the most ardent affection; and whose virtues in one instance increased the happiness of a person long endeared to her; and in the other, diffused the blessing a good and tender heart never fails to communicate

to a worthy family, who fully estimated the good they had received.

Four years are now elapsed since this double union, and the characters of the sisters in married life have evinced the soundness of their principles, the government of their tempers, and the excellence of their understandings: as mothers, they avoid whatever was erroneous in their own education, and follow whatever was beneficial—considerate to their servants, charitable to the poor, hospitable to their neighbours, and kind to all, their husbands justly consider them as “crowns of rejoicing” to their heads, as the tried and faithful friends of their bosoms.

Olivia still resides at her country house, where she is frequently visited by her sisters, or their children. During the first year of their absence Maria Berryl resided with her; but she was comfortably settled in life about that time, by her marriage with a respectable attorney, who had seen her at Miss Mortimer's, in the course of settling her affairs. Since then she has been repeatedly visited by Mrs. Smith and Miss Harwood, who is at this time the governess of a flourishing school, for which she was indebted to Olivia's kind assistance, and where she endeavours to implant in the minds of her pupils those blessed truths inculcated in her own heart by

this generous benefactress.—By every person in her own village Olivia is held in the estimation she so truly deserves ; to her the rich look for advice, the oppressed for protection, and the poor for help ;—when “the eye seeth her it blesseth her,” as one “that maketh the heart of the widow to rejoice,” and “that comforteth the mourners.”

It would be wrong to say that affliction has not produced a salutary effect upon Mrs. Mortimer, since she now for the most part confines herself to her income, and is content to be the oracle of a little circle, who consider her as a lady who once graced a higher sphere, and blame the imprudence which sent her down to them. It has been observed that the sight of her grand-children affected her much ; and that she has been careful to repress in them any propensity to that overweening and yet short-sighted selfishness which, joined to vanity and ambition, was the source of all her errors ; and it is therefore still to be hoped that she will, through Divine goodness, be enabled to pluck still further from her heart the “filthy garment” in which it has so long been enshrouded. But she affords a melancholy proof to misguided mothers, that if a child is brought up “in the way he should *not* go, when he is old he will not depart from it ;” and that, as “many waters cannot quench love,” neither can many sorrows extinguish.

folly. We have no right to set bounds to that Almighty Power, which, in the soul of man, no less than in the chaos of nature, could call light out of darkness ; yet we have no right to expect a miracle to be wrought in our own favour, or that of our children and relatives : to those who expect that a vain, frivolous, fantastic education, may, either by time or circumstances, lead to a rational and pious conduct, bringing forth the “peaceable fruits of righteousness,” we would say, in the language of the apostle, “ Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

I conclude this simple tale with begging my dear young readers to consider what an inestimable blessing it is to have good, pious, and careful parents ; and duly to cherish their counsels and value their benefits ; and next to their parents, *all those* “ who are put in authority over them,” either from necessity or love, since experience must have given them a power of judging and comparing unknown to young people, whatever may be the advantages modern education allows them in other respects. It is particularly desirable that young *women* should attend to this doctrine, since in every station of life they are more peculiarly called upon to practise submission and obedience to the will of others, and resignation

and patience under various sufferings to which the very condition of their being subjects them, and which it is their highest honour and their greatest advantage to endure with uncomplaining meekness and cheerful fortitude, as those who enjoy immediate assistance from Him whose "strength is made perfect in their weakness," and who never fails those who trust in Him.

To those young people who are less happy in the guides of their youth, who are ensnared to folly by the hand that should lead them to virtue, and seduced to error by the example personal affection and natural inclination alike tempt them to follow, I would most earnestly and tenderly recommend the frequent study of the Divine writings of the New Testament, as the guide of their wandering steps, the purifier of their hearts, and the only means of preserving in their minds those principles of humility towards God and integrity towards man which can render them either estimable or happy—can sustain them through the sorrows of this mortal state, which is ever fluctuating and trying, and give them that Divine hope for the future,—

Which builds a bridge across the gulf of Death,  
And leads us safely on the farther shore.

The little history here transcribed is too short

for the purposes of *extensive* instruction or entertainment; but it is humbly presumed that it will not be found wholly deficient in either, since it affords traits of character, as they really exist in the world, and advice which may be profitably acted upon, arising from the imperfect but faithful delineation of them. If *one* afflicted Olivia be taught from the perusal to estimate her own powers of usefulness and renovated happiness; or *one* thoughtless little girl, or inexperienced young woman, be led from it to woo the counsel and return the affection of their maiden aunts or cousins, and stop in the career of fashionable gaiety, or desponding sorrow, to consider the value and pursue the dictates of that blessed religion, which alone can correct the former and enable us to support the latter, I shall not have introduced the *Sisters* to their acquaintance in vain.

## New Juvenile Works

PUBLISHED BY

T. NELSON & SONS, LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

---

### ILLUSTRATED SHILLING BOOKS.

18mo, cloth.

1. MARTHA'S HOME; and How the Sunshine came into it.
2. HOPE ON; or, The House that Jack Built.
3. LITTLE AGGIE'S FRESH SNOW-DROPS, and What they Did in One Day.
4. MATTY'S HUNGRY MISSIONARY BOX, and other Stories. By the Author of "Village Missionaries," &c.
5. STORY-BOOK OF WONDERS IN NATURE AND ART.
6. WATCH—WORK—WAIT; or, The Orphan's Victory. By SARAH A. MYERS.

---

### MRS. HOFLAND'S WORKS—NEW ISSUE.

The following volumes are now ready, price One Shilling each,  
18mo, cloth, with Frontispiece and Vignette.

1. THE AFFECTIONATE BROTHERS.
2. ELIZABETH AND HER THREE BEGGAR BOYS.
3. THE BLIND FARMER AND HIS CHILDREN.
4. THE GOOD GRANDMOTHER AND HER OFFSPRING.
5. ALICIA AND HER AUNT; or, Think Before You Speak.

---

### ILLUSTRATED EIGHTEENPENNY BOOKS (NEW SERIES).

18mo, cloth.

1. SUSY'S FLOWERS; or, "Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy." By the Author of "Hope On," and "Martha's Home."
2. BROTHER REGINALD'S GOLDEN SECRET. By the Author of "Hope On," and "Martha's Home."
3. TONY STARR'S LEGACY; or, Trust in God. By the Author of "Win and Wear."

NEW JUVENILE WORKS.

---

JUVENILE WORKS BY THE LATE REV. DR. TWEEDIE.

Price 1s. 6d. per volume.

1. JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN. 12 Coloured Illustrations.  
2. THE PARABLES OF OUR LORD. 12 Coloured Illustrations

---

NEW STORIES BY A. L. O. E.

Consisting of Twelve New Penny Books, beautifully Illustrated.

1. GOOD-BYE.	7. PAYING DEAR FOR IT.
2. DON'T BE TOO SURE.	8. BEYOND ALL PRICE.
3. QUITE IN EARNEST.	9. HOW ARE YOU?
4. A WHITE LIE.	10. THE LOOK OF THE THING
5. HOLD FAST.	11. GOOD FOR NOTHING.
6. TRY AGAIN.	12. HOW LIKE IT IS.

---

SIXPENNY BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG.

82mo, cloth.

LIVE TO BE USEFUL; or, Annie and her Irish Nurse.  
FAITHFUL NICOLETTE; or, The French Nurse. By SARAH A.  
MYERS.

WHAT IS BETTER THAN GOLD?  
THE BABES IN THE BASKET; or, Daph and her Charge.  
FANNY BURTON; or, Rome was not Built in a Day.  
THE POWER OF TRUTH; or, The Borrowed Bible,  
LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER.  
NELLIE RUSSELL. A Story for the Young.

*Uniform with the above.*

BY MISS CATHERINE D. BELL.

THE HEAD OR THE HEART.  
LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF.  
TRUST IN GOD; or, Jenny's Trials.  
THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.  
WISDOM'S WAYS ARE PLEASANTNESS.  
WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.

---

T. NELSON AND SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.







